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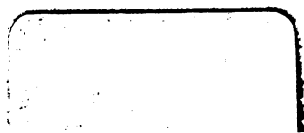
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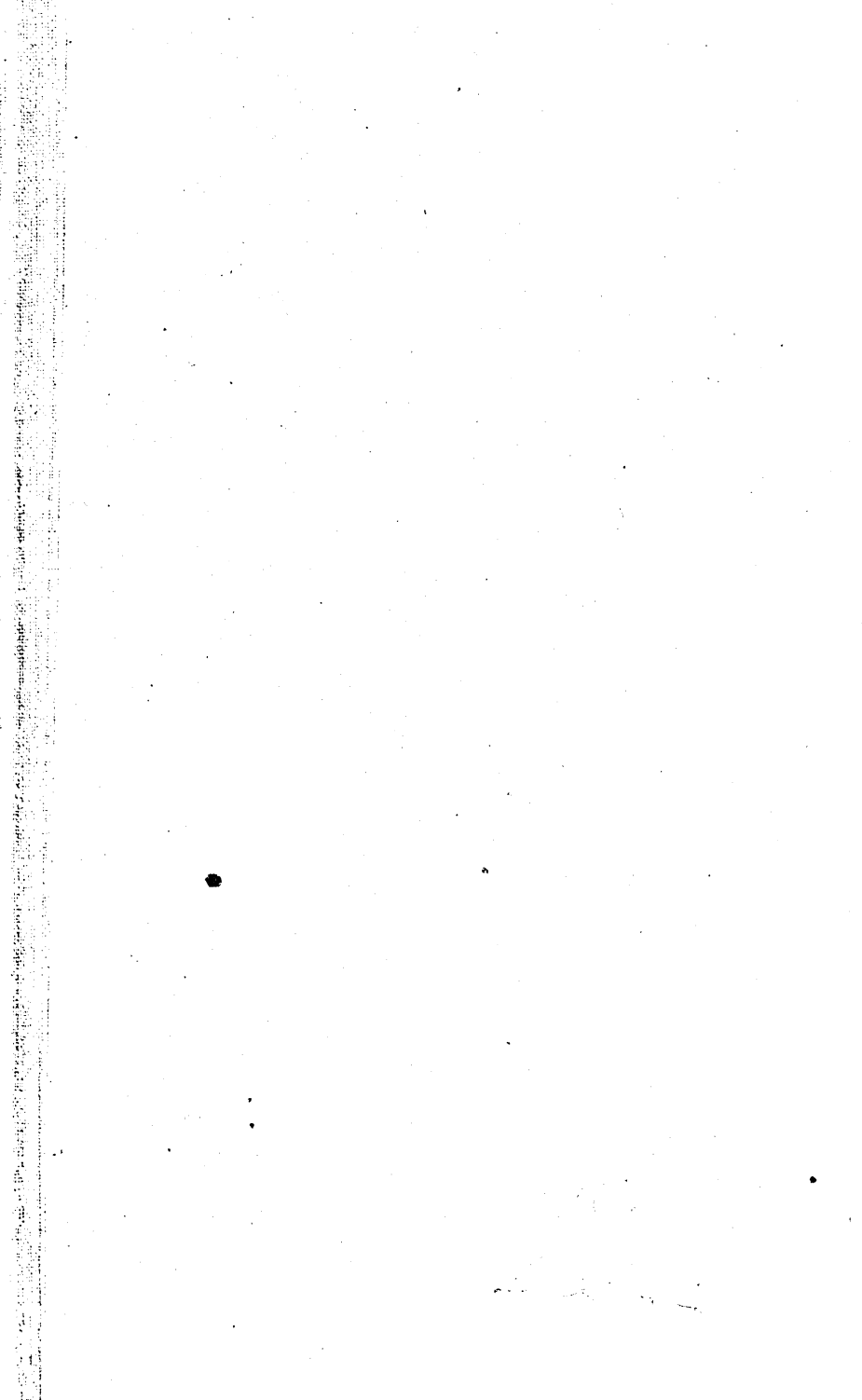
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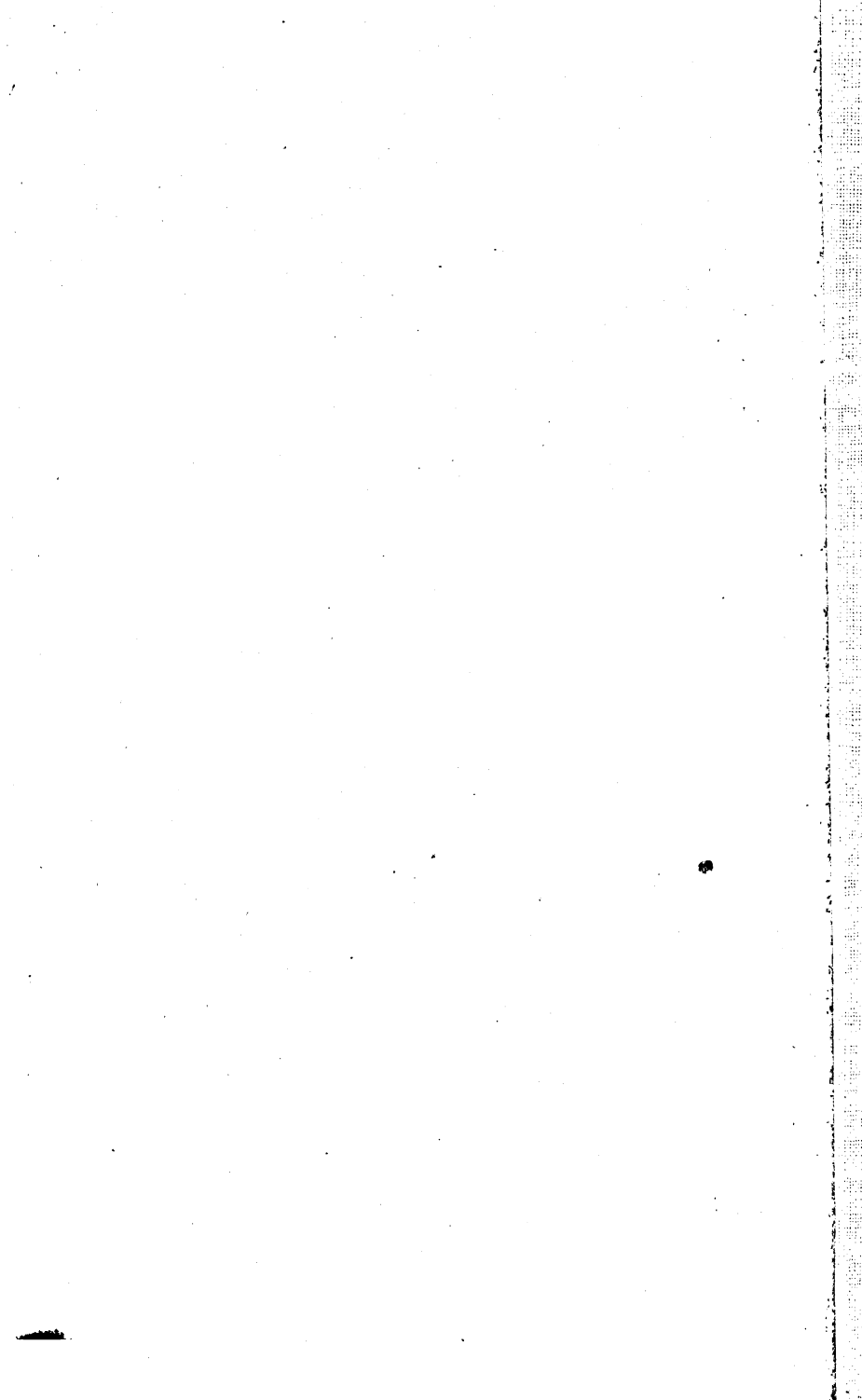
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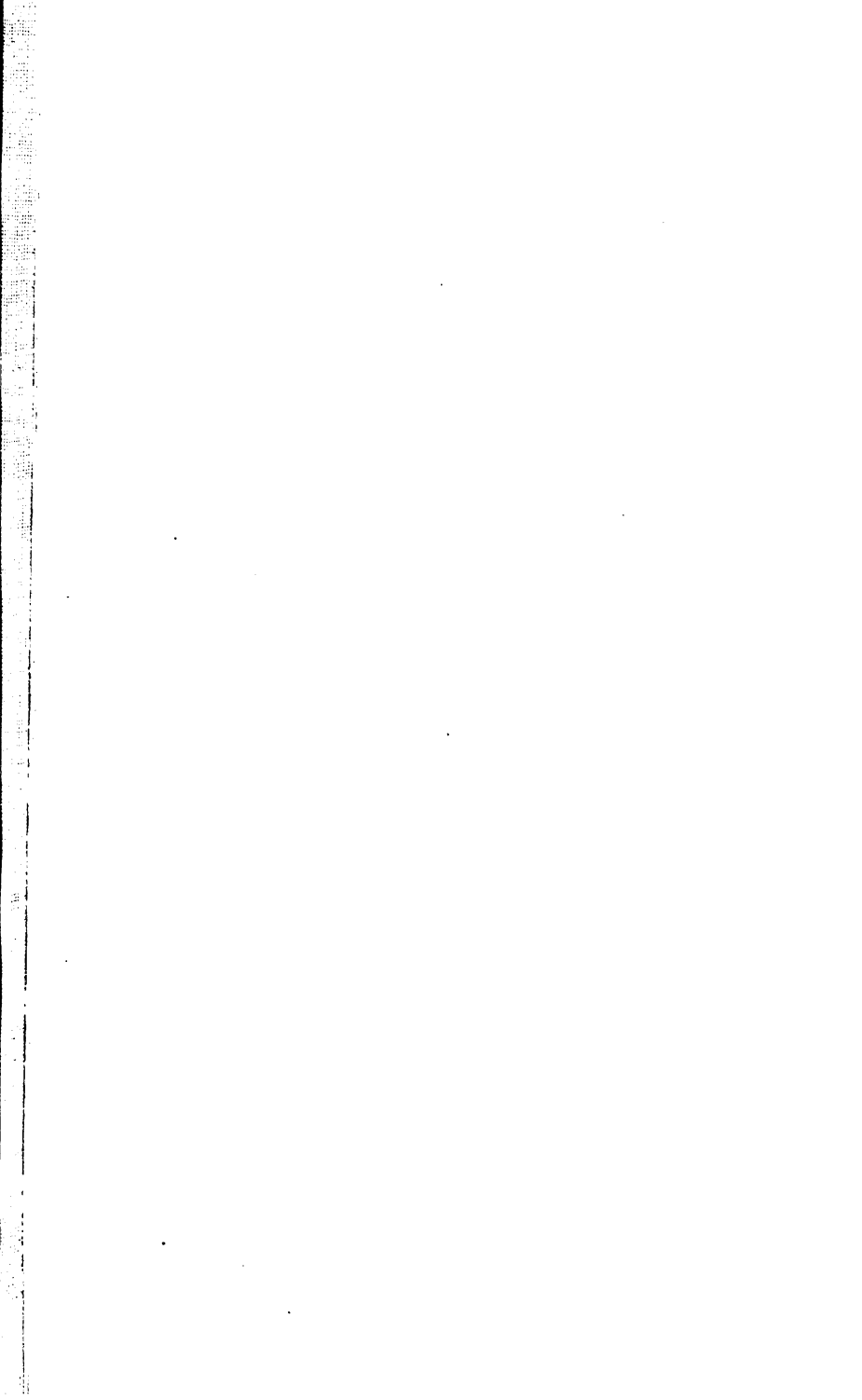
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POEMS
(1899-1902)

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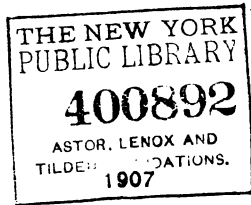
GEORGE CABOT LODGE

POEMS

(1899-1902)

1902
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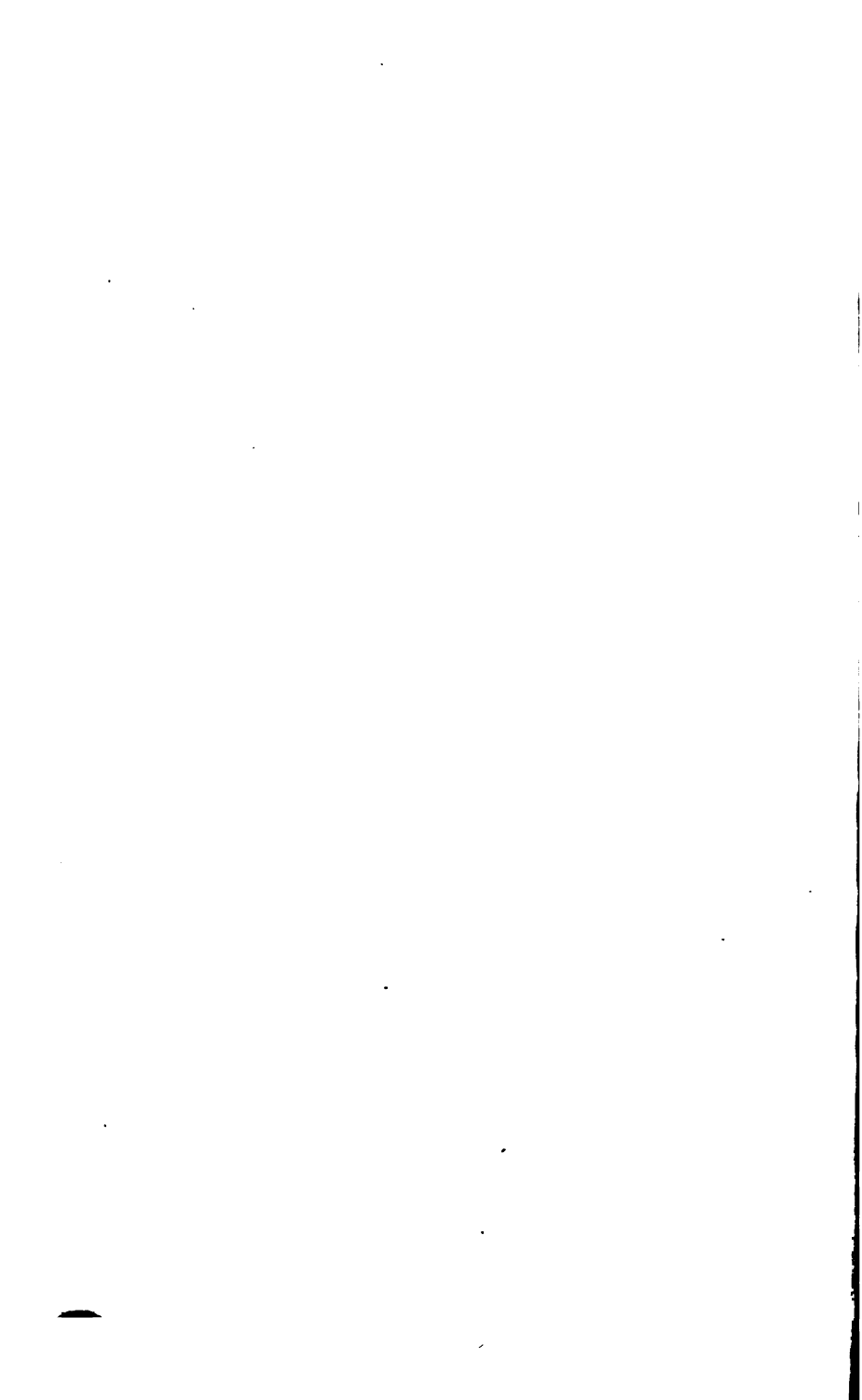
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TO W. W.

*I toss upon Thy grave,
(After Thy life resumed, after the pause, the
backward glance of Death;
Hence, hence the vistas on, the march con-
tinued,
In larger spheres, new lives in paths untrodden,
On! till the circle rounded, ever the journey
on!)*
*Upon Thy grave,—the vital sod how thrilled
as from Thy limbs and breast trans-
pired,
Rises the springs sweet utterance of flowers,—
I toss this sheaf of song, these scattered leaves
of love!*
*For thee, Thy Soul and Body spent for me,
—And now still living, now in love, trans-
mitting still Thy Soul, Thy Flesh to me,
to all!—*
*These variant phrases of the long-immortal
chant
I toss upon Thy grave!*

OUTWARD



OUTWARD.

Outward broad airs, the sea's unshadowed
 sweep,
 And larger voice on shores of lovelier lands,
 Starred heavens of vaster light and night with
 sleep
 Tender as women's hands.

Outward the grave processional of hours,
 Each a discovered joy, a solved surmise,
 Days dark in bud that ripening, fall like flowers
 Gardened in Paradise.

Outward! O throes resolved in mightier song!
 Splendour of nameless deeds, essential words,
 Merged in the large acceptance, in the long
 Pulse of the cosmic chords.

Outward, where every word and deed is fit;
 Outward, beyond the lies of name and
 shame,
 Of sin and ignorance the cause of it,
 Life's prison of fancied flame.

Outward! O heart, the secret solved at last!
Love that enfolds, unites, and understands;
Love like the sea, with equal waters cast
On this and alien lands!

Outward! O free at last! O steadfast soul
Calm in the poise of natural things! O wise,
How wise is love!—only, beyond control,
To pass with open eyes!

THE VOYAGE.

Outward! Sail ever on thy mystic voyages,
Cut loose, up anchor from the shores of
thought!
There leave in safety all the dull world's count-
less captives,
Seek thou the freedom only thou hast sought.

Thine are the prophets, thine the few, the poets,
martyrs,
Stung with the impulse of divine surmise;
Thy chosen ventured while the millions feared
and faltered,
Realized the rapture, dared the great sur-
prise.

Outward! For, ever as of old, the deep sea's
distance,
Ever new skies to lift and lighten, lie
Far down the dusk of day-break from the
shores proved pathways
Pathless to perilous eternity.

Yea! tho' the friendly wharves are all aflame
with faces,

Yea! tho' their anger rave in foolish
sound,—

Outward!—Their hands would hinder but
their hearts are fearful;

Leave them their fetters, Thou shalt not be
bound!

What tho' they cry—"Time's hosts have trod
our ways of life out,

Roads, charts and lamplight,—ours the val-
ued prize,

The proved!" Thou sayest—"My goal how
dim, my seas how trackless,

My risks how vast!" Then leave them to their
lies!

Shake down the sails to catch the blood-red
drift of sunset!

Haste! lest they hold thee slave among the
slaves.

Thou shalt be outcast of their laws and scorned
and homeless:

The sin the world blames is the sin that
saves.

Outward! The sail full-breasted swells against
the night-fall,
And now the world where blind men lead
the blind,
The world of laws and lies, of safety and
obedience,
The prize, the conflict,—all is left behind!

Outward! O haste! The flushed fresh mouth
of dawn is calling!
Outward! O space at last! O light at last!
Steer where the comrades wait thee, journey-
ing still, still outward,
Wise in a conscious and perfected past.

A SONG FOR WAKING.

Ere the blossom of sun from the mystical bud
of the twilight is tenderly, hugely unfurled,

Ere the lion of light from his lair in the womb
of the shaken, green sea-shadows leaps
on the world,

Ere the masterful mistress and mother of life
is released as a child from the womb of
the night,

Ere the echoing bell of the heavens resounds
with the rush of the resonant pinions
of light:

Ere the day is declared and the globes of the
dew are filled full of the splendour of
opal and pearl,

Ere the foam-lilies dropped from the lap of
the storm are as roses that blush at the
breast of a girl,

Ere the aisles of the forest are heavy with dusk
 and are sweet with the murmur and
 marvel of birds,

Ere the dreams of the slumber of earth are de-
 stroyed and she utters her hymn of in-
 effable words :

Thro' the drift of the derelict airs, thro' the
 wind-trodden seas that are windless and
 weary with foam,

On the strength of the shouldering tides and
 the roar of the reflux surge down the
 beaches of home,

Comes the dream of the darkness of light, the
 frail flush of the feet of the dawn down
 the ways of the sea,

Thro' the measureless sound of the marching
 of tides where the steeds of the tempest
 rode fiercely and free !

Comes the delicate rapture of crimson as mute
 and intense as the dream of a passion-
 ate deed,

Comes the miracle faultless as fire and fierce
 as a heart where desire is sown as a
 seed,

Comes the glow like a prayer on the lips of a
prophet whose eyes are aflame with the
vision of God,

Comes the flush like the solemn delight of the
love that can waken a soul in the brute
or the clod.

And the silence is rich with the promise of
song as the face of a child in the still-
ness of sleep,

And the pause of the perfect fulfillment is grave
as a death on the midnight when sum-
mer is deep,

And the joy is the joy of a woman, her love
and the light of her face and the sound
of her feet.

And the calm is profound as the calm of a soul
risen freely from life with his knowl-
edge complete.

Over exquisite wind-dappled meadows that
cover the foot and are fresh as a night
in the fall,

Where the airs scarce remember the rage of the
tempest and darkness is deep round the
world like a wall,

Let us forth, ere the skies are washed empty
of stars as the wind-rippled floods of
the day-spring run free,

Let us forth where the welkin is stately with
sound and the headlands are held in
the cleave of the sea!

Let us leap from the scattered sweet shadows
of slumber and venture our lives on
the charger of youth,

While the sunrise is closed as the lips of a
girl ere the kiss of a lover has kindled
her mouth,

Till the languid, low airs smitten shrill with
our passage re-echo the thunder of hoofs
as we ride,

Let us press down the perilous ways of the
present our steed tho' he bleed 'neath
the rowel of pride!

Let us press in the hidden wet ways of the for-
est filled full of the shadows and
sounds of the past,

Let us travel the fields by the River of Years
till the ways of the waters are open at
last;

And our steed shall be staunch tho' he weary
and wince at the spur, tho' his nostrils
are purple with blood,
For the craving of Soul and the power of
Love, for the freedom of Faith and the
friendship of God!

THE GREEK GALLEY.

The sound of the sea, the sway of the song,
the swing of the oar!
Out of the darkness, over the naked seas,
Our galley is come
With a shiver and leap,
As the blade bites deep
To the sway of back and the bend of knees,
As she drives for home
Out of the darkness, over the naked seas,
To the sound of sea and the sway of song and
the sweep of oar!

The scarlet stars swing low to the ocean's floor
Made silver and pearl by the slow resurgent
sun,
And the waters break
To a leprous wake,
As over the sea the ripples shake
Between dawn and dark, as for life's
sweet sake
The battle of life is fought and won.

And evermore,
 To the sound of sea and the sway of song and
 the swing of oar,
 We sever the sentient silences
 With our wind and way, where over the
 seas
 The surf booms steady and strong on the
 scented shore.

Over the sea's unfurrowed fields
 The miracle spreads and the darkness yields.
 O heart that breaks in the strain and stress
 Of sinews bent to the tempered oak!—
 The golden gates of the dawn express
 Sudden and soft as a girl's caress,
 A glimmer of grass and a flash of wing,
 An echo of prayer to the censer's swing,
 And the altar's pillar of purple smoke.
 And over the spray that the rowers
 fling,
 Wide over the tide where the foam-
 drifts cling,
 As the rhythm of muscle and music
 swing

To the sound of the sea, the sway of the song,
 the sweep of the oar,
 To the crash and cream of waves on the bounti-
 ful shore,
 The spring breaks scented over the sea!
 With a leap of sunlight under the lee,
 As she dips her side
 To the masterful tide
 And lists till the bilge distills through the cy-
 press floor.

O, the lift of blade! O, the clinging and shift-
 ing of naked feet!
 The coil of muscle that stiffens and swells to
 the delicate beat
 Of breath in the nostrils, of blood in the
 brain,
 As the earth-smell steals to our sense again
 From the pebble-blue beach where the shadows
 lie wet and sweet!

We have fought in the noon for breath—
 To the sound of sea and the sway of song and
 the sweep of oar;
 Our bodies would swing at the oars in death,

Nor the rhythm of muscle and music cease,
 Nor the weariness end, nor the sad sur-
 cease

Of sorrow absolve us: but evermore
 Our bodies would swing to the pitiless oar
 Till the goal was reached,
 Till the galley was beached,
 Till we tasted the spring in the forests
 and pleached
 Gardens and vineyards of Greece on the plen-
 tiful shore!

The flurry of foam flecked red as the dawn
 looks over the trees,
 And ever the motion of song and the pulse of
 ineffable seas
 That empty and echoless break on the ex-
 quisite balance of air,—
 And tenderly winged on the morning, a per-
 fumed and delicate breeze,
 Where the scent of the sacrifice floats with
 the distant refrain of a prayer,
 Where the cry of a bird and the whisper of
 grass and the lowing of kine,
 Are borne thro' the thunder of waves and
 the smell of the brine.

And behold! We are come, we are there, we
shall pass thro' the fringes of foam—

To the sound of the sea and the sway of the
song and the sweep of the oar—

And the galley be lifted and leap like our
hearts for the rest that has come—

A spot of sunlight rolls on the reeking floor!
She shall shiver and strike thro' the sun-
dered spray,

And the clean, fresh sand where the ebb-
tides play

Be gored and gashed with her eager
keel;

And our feet shall feel

The swash of sea and the crawl of sand

As we leap to land

And pause and kneel

To the sound of prayer,

While thro' the air

The dawn expands till the shadows are passed

And the noon is over the sea at last!

With our women and slaves, with our oxen
and vines, we shall pass from the roar

And the sound of the sea, the sway of the song,
the sweep of the oar—

And stand where the burden of spring on
the brows of the hills
Is heavy and wet—where the blowing of
pipes and the running of rills
Persist in our ears.—In the warmth of the
sun and the wash of the wind,
In the ceasing of struggle and peace of the
mind,
With the wandering passed,
We are home at last!

THE WORLD'S TOO LONG ABOUT US.

The world's too long about us!—Let us go
 Far from the righteous and the ignorant,
 The vacant phrases of familiar cant,
 The trivial loveless women and the low
 Abortive men, the fashions stale and slow,
 The greed of riches and the crime of want!

Come! lest contentment dim the quenchless fire,
 Come! lest we lose from life the magic spell,
 The power of thought, the ceaseless miracle
 Of day and night, the youth of love's desire.
 Come! lest we wear the livery, take the hire,
 And prove in virtuous platitudes 'tis well.

Come! lest we take the thralldom and the food,
 Accept the hire and kiss the master's hand,
 Or hear, obedient to the world's command,
 Our praises from the Ciceronian "good";
 Or feel the shame of being understood
 By those we know can never understand!

Earth knows our bodies, heaven our conscious
souls!

The world is ignorant of all but name;
Come! let us fear its praise and seek its
blame,

Take larger motives that ignore its goals,
And blow a fire within life's smouldering
coals

To scar its social erebus with flame!

Come!—We can feel, dilate with endless air,
The journeying seas, or watch our Paris take
New moods of laughter, or the sun-God
shake,

Low down the Nile, the splendour of his hair.
Extreme in joy, extreme in soul's despair,
Come! Let us dare to go for sweet life's
sake!

Life's choice is this: the world or all the rest.
The heights are lonely and the depths are
dark;

Haply too weak of soul I miss the mark
And fall below the world's unloveliest
Level of littleness—I say the best
Is mine, I venture life's extremest test.
No failures quench the Truth's eternal spark!

LES BOURGEOIS.

Be silent! Let them laugh and lie
Nor speak nor heed but come away;
In truth they neither live nor die,
More vain than gaudy flies that play
And perish in the vital day.

By rule and custom, time and place,
Secure in noise and littleness,
They live and laugh and lust a space,
Incurious of themselves lest stress
Of truth annul their nothingness.

Their borrowed praise, their hired blame,
Their timid platitudes, their greed,
The virtue of their hidden shame,
The vices of their sordid creed,
Are theirs to serve a social need.

Their crime then? None! Their lives are food
To vainer things, and they shall seem,
Afraid of sin, too weak for good,
Once vanished, like a stupid dream
That never was—and now my theme!—

Be something, good or bad! Be real!
They are not,—we'll take issue here
Against them!—not for base ideal
Or murdered truth, but for their mere
Respectability, the mood of fear!

A SONG FOR REVOLUTION.

Tho' the red-litten cities are shameless and the
rulers are guilty with gold,
Tho' the lips of the prophet are flameless and
the shrines of the sacrifice cold,
Tho' the shadow of freedom departed lies deep
in the paths where She pressed,
Tho', a goddess, She grieves broken-hearted for
the children who starve at her breast,

Tho' the forehead forsaken of bay-leaves is
bound with a circlet of blood
And the sweat that the labour of day leaves
brews the wine of the mercy of God,
Tho' we lose all the loves that besought us, tho'
our children rejoice in their chains,
Still we cling, as our visions have taught us, to
the faith of our raptures and pains!

And tho' Nations forsake the desire and the
faith of immutable things,
Tho' the earth be subdued for their hire who
rejoice in the cities of kings,

Tho' the whole earth be theirs for their pleasure,
and every man master or slave,
Still the sea can afford beyond measure the inheritance perfect we crave!

We can pass where the sand on the shore is ;
made smooth as the breast of a girl,
Where the waves whisper marvellous stories
and the tideways are lustrous as pearl,
Where the crest of the breakers in onset subsides
in a welter of blood
As the flame of the sword of the sunset is
plunged in the breast of the flood;

Where the sea-splintered lightning of noon
lies in the lap of the long afternoon,
By the fire of the pharos of moonrise, with the
faultless, frail feet of the moon,
Over meadows of midnight where starlight
lies scattered like dew on a lawn,
Let us forth so we follow the far light of freedom,
the soul's light of dawn!

Let us go with the wind and the twilight behind us,
the rain in our hair,
With a star on the brows of the shy night in ineffable heights of the air;

The wide waters before us shall whiten, the
 horizon that bound us be rent,
 And no longer our hearts as they lighten shall
 grieve or complain or repent!

We have seen that the progress they praise is
 of tears and enslavement and blood,
 Tho' they honor with blasphemous phrases
 their crimes as the service of God;
 In their mines where the serfs they control
 press, in their factories reeking with coal
 They must labor until they are soulless, and the
 birthright of man is his soul!

Tho' rejected of men we seem friendless, yet
 all nature itself is our home,
 For we come as the last of an endless proces-
 sion and sing as we come!
 But they, faithless and cold to the kernel, with
 their minds in dogmatic control,
 They have lost the divine and eternal strong
 joys of the body and soul!

And we bear as our brothers before us the mes-
 sage eternal and new,
 The exultant, unspeakable chorus of the souls
 that are tender and true,

And our word for each comrade is, "Thee-
ward all joys in the universe trend,
"If thou darest with us to go seaward, on the
seas of the soul without end!

"If thou darest go forth from the phrases that
cheat, from the laws that restrain,
"From the shrines where the high-priest who
prays is untrue and the servant of gain,
"Then the light and the love shall not perish
but endure to illumine the years,
"For the fire of rebellion we cherish is Promethean
and ours by our tears."

It is naught if the loveliest spaces of earth bear
the soilure of greed
For a day or an æon effaces the purpose, the
profit, the deed;
It is naught if they bring us disaster, if they
blacken the skies in our ken,
But we weep for the slave and the master, for
the stunted and loveless, the men!

It is naught if a man be defeated, it is naught if
he suffer and die,
It is naught if he starve and is cheated by the
greedy who pillage and lie,

It is much if reduced to a fashion or bound in
whatever control,
His body is scanted of passion, or he forfeits
the light of his soul!

And we whisper to all men and women, "Lo!
the light is at hand, and the way,
"Be it strange, be it guarded with foemen, is
broad as the justice of day;
"You shall no more be joyless or lonely, our se-
cret shall amply suffice,
"For man's world is a fashion and only man's
body and soul are of price!"

THE HERITAGE.

O, say in the splendour of days that await us,
the scope and desire of midnights to be,
The fruit of what powerful passions shall sate
us, what Truths more effusive shall
make us more free?

What new depths of the soul shall we seek and
discover, what strength of the body,
what heat of the heart?

In the dream of the seer, on the lute of the
lover, what secrets shall yield and what
melodies start?

Shall the days be more ample and florid before
us, the large nights more pregnant of
mystical birth?

What fresh voices shall peal what ineffable
chorus, what beauty revive the old leg-
ends of earth?

The old ramparts of thought, shall they fall
and be shattered? The old barriers of
Love, shall they splendidly fade?

Shall the heavy heaped dust of remembrance
be scattered, our pleasures by loftier
joys be repaid?

Since the rapture of Life is the longing that
rages and Truth is the wisdom that
kindles to flame,

So the judgments of God and the laws of the
sages, man's virtue and evil, his praise
and his blame,

Shall be fused in the Truth of what new reve-
lation, dissolved in the floods of what
limitless light?

As we forfeit our hearts to what new expecta-
tion, what senses shall thrill to what
nameless delight?

In what wise shall the lips of our new loves
grow fervent, what dreamed-of caresses
lie warm in their hands?

Than the Gods who made Sapho their priestess
and servant, what lovelier Gods shall
inflict their commands?

When the altars of Love are heaped up over-
measure, when the passion of love
grows intense as despair,
What embrace shall afford what unbearable
pleasure, on what breast, in the perfume
and dusk of what hair?

And the elder grave Gods we have chosen and
cherish, bright Gods of our youth that
were sumptuous and young!—
Must they fail in the light of new vistas and
perish as fail in long twilights the pulse
of a song?
Shall perfections so distant they seemed a de-
rision, the wild aspirations we dared
not avow,
Be revealed in a solvent new vastness of vision,
attained in a mightier moment than
now?

Then what holier shrines shall receive our ob-
lation, what visions reveal more ineffa-
ble skies?
As we pass from the creeds of our old adora-
tion what marvels shall wake a more
pregnant surmise?

What new virtues and sins shall complete and
delight us, what tenderness thrill in our
hearts like a song?

In what paths where what marvellous day-
spring shall light us, what chorus of
Heroes shall hail us along?

All the questions are vain yet the day never
faileth to light the large dusk of the
limitless past,

And desire forever in all ways availeth to bring
all the largess we long for at last;

A new ecstasy wakes to a novel desire, to a
vision more wise new horizons shall
swell,

Tho' we will to ring round the huge heavens
with fire or satiate such passions they
know not in hell!

Tho' we will to be God all-receptive in heaven,
yet our longing To Be is forever too
small;

We are more than we know, as we ask shall be
given, to ourselves and to only ourselves
we are thrall;

With the sword of our will we may rend as a
curtain the dusk of desires that wince
and withhold,

Whatsoever we ask for the guerdon is certain,
be it dust or the dawn-star, God's
heaven or gold!

THE PASSAGE.

Onward ever and outward ever, over the utter-
most verge of the earth,

With ever before us the perilous vista, behind
us the laughter and light of the hearth;

With the wind of the wilderness fresh in our
faces, the rain in our hair like a chap-
let of light,

As the silent, low shine of the dawn, like a dew-
fall, is sifted and shed thro' the raiment
of night.

And the airs shall be smitten in sunder
Before us

With lightning and voices of thunder
In chorus.

We shall pass over desolate places, strange for-
 est and measureless plain,
 And the noon shall relent and the spaces of
 midnight be severed in twain;
 Over meadows that murmur with fountains,
 where rivers like serpents lie curled,
 We shall pass to the wall of the mountains,
 crouched low on the edge of the world:
 Till the last low ledge of the lea
 Makes division,
 Till the wild, wide waste of the sea
 Fills our vision,
 We must journey in morning and midnight,
 we must travel in sorrow and mirth,
 Onward ever and outward ever, over the utter-
 most verge of the earth!

Onward ever and outward ever, over the utter-
 termost verge of the sea,
 Out over the tremulous tides and the trackless
 waste ways to the wall of the firmament
 free,
 Fulfilled of the light of ineffable spaces, the
 echoless thunder of wind in the night,
 And broad in the burnished blue hollow of
 heaven the endless procession of dark-
 ness and light.

For the fire of the full moon shall waken
 To find us,
 And the hounds of the storm be forsaken
 Behind us;
 We shall on thro' the vistas uncertain, having
 neither beginning nor end,
 Tho' as folds of a fluttering curtain the deep
 sea be shaken and rend,
 Tho' the sea, where the foam-rivers run white,
 be naked and weary and blind
 As the breast of a shield in the sunlight, or
 black with the scourges of wind:
 Till the great green wall of the wave
 Shall cover us,
 Or the sweet spring grass of the grave
 Blow over us,
 We must on till we fall in our traces, we must
 follow the dawn and be free,
 Onward ever and outward ever, over the utter-
 most verge of the sea!

 Onward ever and outward ever, over the utter-
 most verge of the Soul,
 Out over the ages resumed in remembrance,
 the priest's and the tyrant's relentless
 control,

The puny divisions of evil and virtue, restrictions of men and commandments of God,—

O, ever the Soul in all paths and all places where straying or striving the Children have trod!

For the Great Gods who curse and defile us
Shall fear us,

And all men who hate and revile us
Shall hear us;

And the bonds of allegiance that fetter the spirit, the oaths of obedience sworn in the past,

Shall be words of the lesson of life we inherit, embraced, understood, superseded at last.

We are done with the Gods of our old adoration, we acknowledge they served in their turn and were fair,

But we go, for behold! after long preparation what no man has dared to discover we dare!

Till the Body and Soul and all time
Shall be blended,

Aspiration and virtue and crime
Comprehended,

We must fathom the sense and the spirit till we
stand self-possessed of the whole,
Onward ever and outward ever, over the utter-
most verge of the Soul!

DAY AND DARK.

Now the golden fields of sunset rose on rose
to me-ward fall,
Down the dark reverberate beaches clear and
far the sea-birds call,
Blue across the fire-stained waters, eastward
thrusts the chuckling tide,
Fresh as when the immortal impulse took the
lifeless world for bride.

Now the shore's thin verge of shallows keep
the tense and tender light,
Now the stars hang few and faultless, dia-
demed on the brows of night,
Now the moon's unstinted silver falls like dew
along the sea
While from far a friendly casement softly fills
with light for me.

So it ends! I reaped the harvest, lived the long
and lavish day,
Saw the earliest sunlight shiver thro' the break-
ers' endless play,
Felt the noonday's warm abundance, shared
the hours of large repose,
While the stately sun descended thro' the twi-
light's sumptuous close.

Now the night-fall—Ah! I guess the immortal
secret, glimpse the goal,
Know the hours have scanted nothing, know
each fragment hints the whole,
While the Soul in power and freedom dares
and wills to claim its own,
Star over star, a larger, lovelier unknown
heaven beyond the known!

RETROSPECT.

Beyond the earth is sea,
Beyond the sense is soul,
Beyond this life a little sleep,
Beyond the race the goal.

I know the earth is young,
And time a little thing;
When first the stars harmonious sung
Thro' heaven, I heard them sing.

Full well I know that I
Was there when chaos hurled
Formless and fervent on the void
The huge and pregnant world.

Sheer down the endless skies
We took our furious flight,
Our wings of flame flapped, vast and dumb,
Against the ageless night.

Helmless and wild we crossed
The eternal seas of space,
And moored beside the sun and swung
In our predestined place.

Pure as a distant song,
Echoed from south to north,
The strange first dawn came grave and strong,
Gigantically forth.

The sheer black pinnacle
Of sky grew vaguely blue,
As down the cold, thin, empty airs
The red light glistened thro'.

And when the last stars died
About the noonday sun,
And on the enormous distance fell
Daylight's oblivion,

I saw green tendrils blur
The acrid plains, the sea
Suck down between the naked hills,
Roaring immeasurably.

Then day retired, night fell,
 Frail breezes shook the air;
The moon showed large between the stars
 Her void unfaltering stare.

Thro' all the perfect night
 Ringing with silver, I
Stood in my human solitude,
 Wondering ineffably.

Then, in response, I heard
 A voice within me sing:
"I know the stars are very young,
 "And Time a little thing!

"Always Truth waits beyond
 "Larger and more divine:
"The immeasurable Past
 "And light and life are mine.

"Father, O Soul of Me!
 "Thy scope is never whole;
"Always a new infinity
 "Lies waiting for the Soul!"

Beyond the earth is sea,
Beyond the sense is soul,
Beyond this life, a little sleep,
Beyond the parts the whole!

SONNETS.

I.

Cut loose! Hoist sail! Leave the familiar
shores

Of life! Drive out on love's enormous wind
Far from the safe small pieties and blind
Tangles of conscience! O set wide the
doors

And throw the strong arms open utterly!

Go forth reckless with faith and unre-
signed,

Thus only seeking shall you surely find
The peril and rapture of true liberty!

Thus only shall divine discoveries

Stretch the vague margins of the conscious
soul

And fire the peaks of more inclusive skies;

Thus may we burst the self-created bond

Of sordid fears and hear life's surges roll

On shores of truth that always lie beyond!

II.

Would I were hopeful as the tender leaves,
 Would I were faithful as the myriad grass,
 Kindling conviction in the ways I pass;
 Would I believed as every flower believes!
 The pale wheat springs and flowers, the golden
 sheaves
 Serve in their turn—the Earth's religion
 brings
 Proof of the power and miracle of things,
 That none are infidel and no thing grieves. !
 No thing in nature grieves and all things die;
 Yea! from their burial Life is born anew:
 O faithful grass of graves!—perchance
 when I
 Change to the earth's desire, my soul shall take
 Thy lesson of faith and joy and still renew
 My journey onward for the journey's sake!

III.

The earth is glad of travail and laboring :

The flower the whole sun's kiss is spent upon,
The leaves light, as of sea depths smitten
with sun

And musical with incessant murmuring,—
Bound as a girdle, the strong sea's silver ring,
Where thro' and thro' the deep, clear hair of
night

Stars tread the chattering tides and swollen
with light

Moon walks beneath the slow dawn's fervent
wing,—

Earth, sea,—to them the large, fresh, passion-
ate deed

Of life is glad and wise—how wise is faith!
Life's harvest flowers, death sows the ex-
haustless seed :

We probe the intention till the soul has won
Vista,—awake at last! Yea! journeying on
Equal and wise and free with life and
death!

IV.

How long the impassive feet of Time have trod
The myriads and their monuments to dust!
How long the frailest, loveliest leaves have
trust!

How long life urges in the reeking sod!
The flower is witless of a master's rod,
The sunlight warms the unjust with the just,
The he-bird, joyous in his vernal lust,
Carols in native ignorance of God.
And, when the travesty of God's control
And human reason leave us at the last
Naked before the all-receptive Soul,
Incurious of the ends of life and death,
Numb with the monstrous effort of our past,
We pray the bird for joy, the flower for
faith.

V.

Most lone and loveliest star, in glimmering
spheres

Of twilight hung, as tho' the lids of night,
In one liquescent utterance large as light,
Let fall the delicate silver of her tears;

Monotonous music mute to mortal ears,
Vibrant as birds that cry across the bright
Silence and thro' the distance tense and
white,

Where loud as life the incessant dawn ap-
pears.

Thou art, O star, how like a conscious soul
Leaving the shadowy shores of life to blend
Deep in the lustre of its native sea!

Or like, in heaven, the pure and liquid toll
Of one unechoing bell to mark the end
Of God's rule and man's infidelity!

VI.

How many a wave, O shore of life, to thee
Has flowed, and murmuring, teased thine
ignorance!
How many a derelict from the winds of
chance
Has signaled some unguessed eternity!
The passion and pulse and power of all the sea
Fills the thin foam with fierce significance,
And thro' the sea-moods, to the deeper
glance,
Pierces the same intention utterly.
Still, from life's shores to sea-ward, can the
soul,
Glimmering in dawn, spread out a wider
pool
Of light and vision till shadows flow to
flame,
As one by one we dare include the whole
Of human change within our scope, nor
school
Our hearts to virtue more than sin and
shame.

VII.

Mine is the bellowing, all-receiving sea,
Mine the long beaches blurred with drifted
foam,
Mine the blind earth, the human lights of
home,
The midnight shuddering, deepening end-
lessly.
Mine is the world to-night! Yea! Mine shall
be
Vistas and vaster worlds, a certain dower,
When after faith, free love and conscious
power,
Soul dares desire its own infinity.
Naught can be asked or given for all is ours:
Ours of all space the cold incessant miles,
Ours of all time the full, unstinting hours;
And ours the sea beyond, that round the warm
Shores of our being whiles will sleep and
whiles
Breathe thro' the soul the epic voice of storm.

VIII.

THE POET.

He comes last of the long processional,
Last of the perfect lovers, doomed as they
To live ever more lonely day by day
By all rejected and condemned by all.
Hands stretch to hold him, passionate voices
call,
Bright lips beseech him,—yet he cannot stay.
Treading in the large night his outward way
He learns how much the crowns are spiri-
tual.
His heaven is godless since his faith is whole;
No thing but finds in him a perfect love,
No flower, no star but buds within his soul.
Labor and sleep, the warmth of home belong
To all but him,—he feels instead thereof
His heart's blood smelted to the ore of song.

ODE TO THE SEA.

Lure me, O musical motions of the sea,
 Thou of the cosmic heart most mighty
 mood!
 And breathe beside me once again, O ye
 Intimate whispers of the outlawed wind!
 And grant, O Earth of long maternity,
 While dawn grows golden like an infant
 God
 Who walks the young world's twilight nude
 and free,
 Thy latest child the rest he cannot find!

Still as I sought thee soul and flesh were fain!
 Before the flower of sunset, one by one,
 Scattered its petals like a golden rain,
 Before the twilight clear as amethyst
 Covered my lidless eyes, within my brain
 Seemed, in the lasting silence of the sun,
 All life as interludes of uttered pain
 That scar the lips of Heaven's mute
 Agonist!

I am the heir to Time's exceeding dower :

Ease me, thou minstrel of the changeless
theme!

Now while the midnight yields the mystic
flower

• Of moondawn, violent as a sanguine stain,
Like love's desire that in night's loneliest hour

Dawns thro' the empty twilight of a dream,
Mend with thy music-threads of faith and
power

Life's raiment ruinous with surmise and
pain!

Moon-like the motion of thy rhythmic cries

Has lured how many a sea of tears to flood!
How many a time thy sacramental sighs,

Swelling the daedal veins of silence, bring,
In eastern chambers where the darkness dies,
Thro' Death's half-fallen veil of solitude,

Desirous tears, sad eucharist of eyes

Last opening over earth's essential spring!

Soon shalt thou feel the miracle of light

Soft as the distant music of a shell;

Thy voice that creeps around the world to-
night

Breathes from long vistas of deciduous
 years,
 Since first thy bitter waters void of sight,
 Sterile of seasons, on earth's valleys fell
 As fall like darkness in the soul the bright
 Burden of life's insuperable tears!

Soothe me! For when the sundawn gilds thy
 tide,
 Poised like love's lotos on life's perilous
 stream,
 When flower by flower the earth grows open-
 eyed,
 Almost I would to God my soul were
 drawn
 Where body and soul seem nearly to divide,
 Till, lapsed from life's dark labyrinth of
 dream,
 I ceased in darker solitudes and wide
 Eventual silence of the ripening dawn.

Louder than cymbals, on thy silver breast
 The gold of sunrise falls—our loneliness
 Ends with the shadows and the vain unrest
 Of life returns like long-familiar pain.

Grant me the soul's deep truth thy voice expressed,

The power to live in human tenderness,
Yea! tho' I pass, repass, and never rest
Still bound to life and death's immortal chain!

Then shall the seas of soul be like to thine,
Endless in stately vistas drowned in sun;

Then shall I take thy perilous call for sign,

Then shall I leave the world's familiar shore

Seizing the soul's inheritance for mine;

Then, while the huge horizons merge to one
All-welcoming sphere, O then the Ship Divine
Lost in the daybreak shall return no more!

ODE TO THE EARTH.

I.

O tireless earth! O earth of long desire!
 Old earth whence now the gradual leaves
 transpire,
 Earth of eternal seasons, let me feel
 The folded flower of thy returning spring
 Thrill with the urge of life's divine appeal!
 Grant me, O earth, the faith thy seasons bring!

Thro' silent airs, from sky to sky,
 The effluent tides of darkness pour,
 With foam of fire against the sunset's shore;
 And now, as one by one the bird-cries die,
 Singly thine ancient silences redeem
 Spaces that verge a sea of sleepy sound,
 And, 'stablished thro' the immobile dusk, they
 seem
 Like song but lately ceased, while on the
 wound
 Of daily life descends the balm of dream.

II.

O earth across thy sentient sleep,
Like silent maidens, one by one,
Meseems thy countless days, dead daughters of
the sun,

Their unforgetful journey keep.
Meseems beneath the masque of night,
Clear in thy dreams, their large, remorseful
eyes

Always are overflowed with quenchless light;
While, from their cataract of golden hair,
Falls an ethereal fragrance and their shattered
skies

Are swayed with elemental tides of air.

For surely when the world is fain

Of thy desire that never dies,

Thy toil of child-birth stirs again

The mighty legend of thy memories,

Till, even as when the feet of Lilith pressed

Thy fruitless sod and roused the tardy spring,

Pale in thy florid sleep, thy daughters bring

Thrills of remembrance yearning in thy breast,

And this to-night is stirred, as one by one,

Rain-robed or bright with raiment of the sun,

Like some processional of barefoot boys,
 They move across thy dream and all their pain,
 Their gifts, too generous, and their splendid
 joys
 Seem like loved voices lost and heard again.

III.

Surely as, when the firmamental airs
 Grow, in a warm and lovelier noonday, sweet
 With flowers thy fruitful bosom bears,
 Forth from thy vistaed memories flow
 Thy life's unnumbered days that tread with
 ghostly feet
 Thy large and dreamful slumber, so
 Seen in the truth of thine essential mood,
 All things that were return and none can die
 Save for the ends of life. God knows if I,
 Tired with all the task of time,
 Died at thy breast, my cold and pulseless blood
 Would stir to feel the essential ichor climb
 The world's wide uplands, or beside
 My cheek the winds grow warm, or on my
 mouth the sweet
 Savour of sunrise, or against my naked side

The thrust of earliest grass, the chill of dew.
 Yea! even my mere mute flesh would wake
 anew,

O earth of graves and flowers, as thou dost
 take

The burden of new birth for mere life's sake!

IV.

Grant me to know thy larger love! If I
 Always must go, beneath the self-same sky,
 Thro' life and death and can no more depart,—
 Grant, if I wisely serve thy large commands,
 That rivers of thine own rhythm drown my
 heart!

For now meseems my life is grown,
 Vain as a shattered bowl
 To hold the essential vintage of the soul.
 Change me from small endeavors crazed to win
 Mean ends for aims whose littleness is sin
 To moods profound, effusive, all thine own;
 Till, flower by flower I understand
 As day by day the miracles expand!

V.

Now spring from seaward blows, anon
The winds grow cold as one by one
They take the withering leaves,—thro' storm
and calm

Thy lips are flowing with the eternal psalm
Of moving seas, but still beneath the masque
Of seas and seasons in their tireless task
Thy mood is silence and thy gift is grace!
Tho' endless years replenish and efface,
Thou art as one whose soul beneath the test
Of human agony and human strife,
This restless interlude of life,
Is conscious of eternal rest
In spheres whose very scope is peace!
Thou sayest that life shall never cease,
Yet now I dream that death has ceased to be
And life has ceased; Yea! Life appears to me
A bowl of Lethean wine whose margin's curve
Is burned and bitter with the eager kiss
Of myriads tortured by the thirst they serve.
While in my dreams thy natural pieties
Seem as the phases of the soul that is
But neither lives nor dies!

And when at last my visions fade to this
Level of lawn, and when thy silences
Are mightily 'stablished, as the emphatic hand
Of darkness stays the cries of sleepy birds
And turns the golden breezes blind and bland,
Then all my dreams, desires and words
Depart and leave me silent with the deep
Meanings of silence; thro' my darkened mind
Light buds, as now, thro' tides of warmer wind,
Stars blossom on the night, and life seems large
as sleep.

Then idly, tenderly, my hand
Falls on thy flowers still fresh with happy rain
And wise with tears I seem to understand
The purposes of pain!

THE JOURNEY ON.

I.

My lips shall kiss thy brows!
Thy blood—now in my heart perchance the
pulse of it!—
Shall fall upon my face from all the thorns.

Of their dead lives who killed and felt the
scorn,

Thy pity,—all its justice, vista, faith,
How utterly dim, unguessed, or briefly seen
As tho' a starred night thro' a wall's interstice
glimpsed or sea-view caught between
the crouching hills,—

When once, in some long-hence, prepared ar-
rival,

Realized and known by me, in me comprised,
Shall round the soul's slow spheres and lift a
larger horizon!

Then all the strewing of light in all thy ways,
 (Now even I glimpse thee by the self-same
 light)

Shall flow between our eyes incessantly;
 Then as my lips gleam crimson from thy brows
 And feel thy lips—the comrades kiss at last!

II.

Long hence thou shalt acclaim me!

In retrospect of mine how many a god!—
 Fauns, stream-side nymphs, in twilights of
 mid-May

Shy hamadryads and reluctant ghosts,
 Ishtar in Babylon who trod
 Hearts of fierce lovers in her wine-press out,
 Setebos, Hapi and the phallic Min,
 Thoth with a mystic wisdom, Iahveh, Baal,
 Ra, and the glorious, strange moon-father Sin,
 Golden Apollo with the throbbing throat,
 White Aphrodite in the mid-seas blue—
 These, and of all my mythic infancy the dim
 and elder gods,
 Gods that no legend hints, no indirection
 proves,

I, journeyed on in paths by them untrodden,
 On seas unhinted in their charts, their indica-
 tions, prophecies,

After an age of years turning, resume, inter-
 pret:

These, now with negligent arms about my
 neck,

Grave heads against my breast, deep eyes to
 mine,

Come face to face at last, at last acclaim me!

So thou, Essenian of the later Gods,
 As these my childhood's aspirations one by one,
 After long journeys done, dreams realized,
 thoughts explored, faint indications
 proved,

Meet me and mate me with deep, quiet eyes—
 I knowing we all are equal Gods at last—
 And kiss my naked brows and send me forth
 Vaster by them, by love and knowledge of
 them—

So thou!—the pause returned, the vaster task
 resumed, the distance measured,—

Surely my soul shall find thee somewhere wait-
 ing then!

Surely mine eyes, sphered to how vast a light,
Shall tally thine, surely my neck shall feel
The strength and tenderness of thy sweet
pierced hands,

Surely thy brows shall share with mine—we
equal Gods at last!—the sacred bur-
den of thy human blood,

The while thy sad, pierced feet, in all my ways,
Equally go with even pace with mine, by open
roads, by open seas vistaed before us,
still untrod, uncrossed by thee or me,
As we together take the long, long journey on!



FOR E. L.



FOR E. L.

I.

She stands before me till the space grows void,
And round her form the desert's sterile heat
Throbs with the tread of strong, impassive
feet

And song in fanes She builded and de-
stroyed.

The tideless waters swell and fall, the beat
Of sunlight thrills along her limbs and glows
On jade and turquoise, and her even brows
With myrrh and natron seem forever sweet.
She, child of mightier days and larger loves,
Stands like a silence in the sound of life,
And recent things about her beauty seem
Vain and unlovely as our human strife;
Wise and ineffable as Truth She moves
As moves a great thought thro' a foolish
dream.

II.

She moves in the dusk of my mind like a bell
with the sweetness of singing
In a twilight of summer fulfilled with the joy
of the sadness of tears,
And the calm of her face and the splendid, slow
smile are as memories clinging
Of songs and of silences filling the distance
of passionate years.

She moves in the twilight of life like a prayer
in a heart that is grieving,
'And her youth is essential and old as the
spring and the freshness of spring;
And her eyes watch the world and the little,
low ways of the sons of the living
As the seraph might watch from the golden,
grave height of his heaven-spread wing.

She moves in the darkness of Time from the
centuries large as her spirit;
From the magic of elder religions when the
epic desires were strong,

'And the old, grave glories that She, of the living,
alone may inherit
Flow back from the harp of the past like the
notes of ineffable song.

She moves thro' the trivial days in the might of
the peace of her presence;
And, sweet as the death of a child, in the
still high places of thought,
Her soul in the hunger of life is appeased in a
perfect florescence,
Apart from the shadows and dust that our
little desires have sought!

III.

Why are you gone? I grope to find your hand;
The light grows secret as your tenderness;
My tears that fall for utter loneliness
Seem sad as sunset in an alien land.
Old simple words that you could understand
And only you, are striving to possess
My lips with utterance and their weariness
Burns with the fever of a vain command.

Why are you gone? The large winds, sea-
ward bound,
Tell of long journeying in the endless void.
Why are you gone? I strain to catch the
sound
Of footsteps, watch to see the dark destroyed
Before your lustrous fingers that would
creep
Over my eyes and give me strength to sleep!

IV.

Pour down thy hair between the world and me!
Between myself and my exhausted soul
Spread, in the dreadful vistas where my
goal

Saddens and fails, thy love's euthanasy!
Fold me away from Time and let me be
Silent and ceased from bitterness, be thou
Tacit as childhood and thine ivory brow
Thoughtless, and be thou tender utterly!
Strength, give me strength to spare the futile
tears!

Give me the consciousness of something
proved:

Faith, wisdom, personal and briefly true.
I sift the scant earned knowledge of my years
Like dust between my hands, and all I loved
And hoped and dreamed dissolves and blends
to you!

V.

She turned the falling light to fire,
Dull fire throughout her sombre hair;
It seemed She phrased the world's desire,
Desire that woke with fervent prayer
Thrills of a secret wonder everywhere.

Her eyes caught splendours from the sun,
Vague airs grew warm about her face,
She saw the fire-stained ripples run
And sing to sleep the smouldering space
Of sunset and sink whispering on her trace.

Height over height the skies caught fire:—
She watched the red contagion flow,
The wide, wild wings of flame aspire
Till heaven uplifted seemed to grow
A huge, domed sapphire paved with crimson
snow.

Her lips were still and marvellous,
But, like a lute whose silence sings,
Her hand fell warm in mine and thus
Told me imperishable things :
She held my senses as a perfume clings.

My mind was like an ancient town
Of shadows carved in moonlight, there,
Like dreams thro' latticed casements blown,
The twilight of her endless hair
Brought stately visions, sweet and sad and fair.

Along the towers and walls of thought
They hung bright banners flown with
song,
The crooked, unlitten byways caught
Their fires, and, as they passed along,
My dull, wild heart woke strangely and was
strong.

So fire fell back from sky to sky,
Night deepened down the purple sea :
She turned her solemn eyes and I,
In wonder and in certainty,
Still touched her hand and still it sung to me.

VI.

Thy breast is stainless as a star, thy hand
Is calm and white and slow and thou dost
come
Sweet as a long-remembered song of home
Heard thro' the twilight of an alien land.
Thine eyes are pure and still, they understand
More than our thoughts surmise, and stately
dreams
Hover about thee and thy presence seems
Calm with a ceaseless custom of command.
With memories of thy face the ways of time
Are splendid, and my hours divinely stirred
With tremor and silence as of unshed tears.
Thou dost resume, as tho' the sea's sublime
Music were uttered in a single word,
The warm magnificence of earlier years.

VII.

O murmur and passionate silence of to-night!
 Earth of sublime arrival!—Let there creep,
 Like music thro' the muffled gloom of sleep,
 Tremours of Life's imperishable might,
 Whether from airs that range the steep starred
 height
 Of heaven, or where the delicate dew is deep
 On grass and flowers, or where the bird-cries
 leap
 Loud down the pathways mute and bare with
 light.
 Fabric of night, O easeful rest, O airs
 Kissing Her cheek, O flowers that feel Her
 feet,
 O, Life, O earth's impetuous utterance!—
 We stand to-night the fit and faithful heirs
 To Life's inheritance,—the power, the sweet
 Strong motive, and the Soul's ecstatic
 trance!

VIII.

Star of the sumptuous dusk and silent air,
Thou loveliest child and latest-born of night,
Jewel that binds the solemn brows of light
Swept by its lustre of luxurious hair;

O star of sundawn like a thread of prayer
Weaved thro' the fabric of a song of bright
Echoes and passionate notes of life's de-
light:—

O throbbing heart of heaven, unstained and
bare!—

Thou, in thy twilight, art as tho' her hand
Dawned thro' the glamour of a gorgeous
dream;

And as to me her loveliness is shed
Thro' depths of ancient time, I see thee stand
Exalted and thro' endless space thy beam
Fall pure and steadfast on the world I tread.

IX.

I.

She moves beside the leaping sea,
Along the beaches fledged with foam;
The winds go seaward wearily,
The waves seem children straying home.

The golden breath of day retires
Between the crimson lips of cloud,
She seems, amid the smouldering fires,
Like starlight thro' a burning shroud.

I say "The toiling sea is old,
"The function lasts, the form is change;
"Yon wave that falls in splintered gold
"In every drop is fresh and strange.

"Thine eyes are deep as fluent pools
"Of starlight—Yet despite of thee
"The world despairs of death—O fools,
"Behold the fresh and stainless sea!

"The sea that felt the loveliest far
 "And eldest God of earth transpire,
 "Her flesh more radiant than a star,—
 "The sea is young and cannot tire!

"The myriad waters run in ways
 "Where moved a million tides before,
 "So you aspire thro' all my days
 "The same yet strange for evermore!"

II.

The sunset spins its splendid skein,
 The sea-birds pass with fearless eye,
 The daylight falls in golden rain
 To gardens of a vaster sky.

I say: "Like some sonorous bell,
 "Flame-forged to call for war or prayer,
 "Debased to chime a vulgar spell
 "And phrase the pain of vulgar care,—
 "So they, for whom their lies suffice,
 "Who fear the splendid task of love,
 "Who choose the world and pay the price,
 "Are dead,—their lives are proof thereof!

"But now they seem as something gone
 "A long, long while, and I may stand
 "And hear the calm sea-monotone,
 "And watch thy face and touch thy hand."

III.

The stars come few and full as tears,
 The dark absorbs her fold on fold;
 She seems a song of earlier years,
 A myth the lips of heroes told.

She turns, the twilight clothes her shape,
 The sands she treads seem moist with blood;
 Measured and low from cape to cape
 Sea-music thrills the evening's mood.

I say "The wondering-up of love,
 "The float of incense and the gloom
 "That warmed of old thine altars, move
 "About thee like a dull perfume.

"And like a ship of glimmering pearl,
 "My heart adventures far to sea:
 "The urge of wind, the breakers curl
 "Seem promptings of infinity.

"Day dies and night along my trace,
"Thy hair, the gloom and glow thereof,
"Surrounds me, and thy solemn face
"Is dawn across the seas of love!

"Behold thou art like sleepy wine
"In all my sense, and now at last
"Thy human hours of life are mine
"And all thy strong, sonorous past!"

X.

Ours is the day of soul-despair,
The glimmering faith, the scanted sight;
But thine the dim, deserted night,
And, dark as moonlight thro' thy hair,
The stately, solitary air.

Ours are the years of foolish strife,
Of small desires and smaller gain;
But thine, beyond the toil and pain,
Inert, unstirred by death or life,
The changeless Truth that proves us vain.

Ours are the trivial joys, the tears,
The toil whereat our lives are priced;
But thine, with nothing sacrificed,
The harvest of unnumbered years,
The silence where the soul appears.

Ours is a short, sad sentience, ours
Brief time and then forgetful sleep;
But round thy face thy memories keep
Strange vigil, and the lotos-flowers
Of Egypt scent thy living hours.

Ours are the life and death that seem,
 Ours is the race, but thine the goal,
 And thine the calm, unhindered soul
 That holds the dreamer and the dream
 As notes in one harmonious theme.

We damn and praise, we crown the few
 With power and fame—a fading wreath;
 In thine alembic Life and Death
 Unite: beyond our partial view
 Thy calm eyes know that all is true!

Thy vision sphered to vaster skies,
 Thy breast that keeps, serene and strong,
 The pulse of earth's eternal song,
 Thy hands that stir not and are wise,
 Thy face of epic centuries,

Thy soul that sees beyond the tomb,
 Thy faith of wise and perfect love,
 Thy heart that time is lyric of—
 They know thro' life and death we come
 Theward like children straying home.

XI.

Thine is the silence of a night of mist,
Thine is the wonder of a night of stars,
Thine is the body, a solemn eucharist,
And thine the face, the eyes no shadow
mars
Save of thy hair the twilight pale as amethyst.

Thine is the voice, phrased echo of the sea,
And thine the mood of statues black with
moon,
Staring, inert, with eyes too tense to see,
Eastward thro' deserts desperate with
noon;
Thine is the day-spring of the world's eter-
nity.

Thy breast is perfumed of forgotten flowers,
Thy dreams and destinies are old as youth
That thrills, in chorus of memorial hours,
The longing and the laughter of thy
mouth;
Thy soul is proud and calm with long-immor-
tal powers.

Thine is the portent of a deathless thing,
Thine is the passion of a mortal change,
Thine is the love—Ah God!—to cleave and
cling,
And thine the lover, violent and strange,
To tune the lyre for thee, despair and break the
string,
Lest song turn discord tried beyond its
range!

XII.

Thine is the joy of life's transcendent hours,
 Thine is the grief of childish memories,
 Thy footsteps seem to fall on fragrant flowers,
 Strewn for the feet of grave Divinities;
 Thine eyes recall forgotten pieties.

Deep in thy breast the sacred perfume lingers,
 Breathed from the lotos that were wont to
 hang
 Rose o'er the sistrum in thy rhythmic fingers,
 When thro' the shrine's mysterious twilight
 rang
 Thy voice and all the unseen respondents
 sang.

Thine are the powers of Gods that now are
 nameless,
 Still on thy face there seems to fall the glow
 Of fires that flared on shrines for ages flame-
 less,
 Still where the diadem pressed thy faultless
 brow
 Heavy with gems, the dimples linger now.

Age after age the myriads live and perish,
Their's the harsh conflict and the sordid
gain;
Thine is the wisdom souls alone may cherish,
Thine is the truth that heals the essential
pain
Of time and change and makes death's conquest vain.

Life is a spark the night of death encloses,
Somewhere is sunrise if the soul is sooth;
And thou in life's brief hour of thorns and
roses
Show us the fashion of a deathless youth,
The solemn portent of a final truth.

ISHTAR.



THE SONNETS OF ISHTAR.

I.

I am the world's imperishable desire;
 Life is because I will, for hope of me
 Life is, nor all the dark depths of the sea
 Could quench mine eyes' light nor my body's
 fire.

Fresh hyacinth and the violent rose suspire,
 The black clod breaks to green eternally,
 Sap thrills to parturition the naked tree,—
 Of all things living I only cannot tire.

I am the world's interminable sin;
 Yea! In my power and lust beyond control,
 Things mortal wage the war of life and win.
 For me the slave defies the master's rod,
 And while the antique pride swells within
 his soul
 The man reclaims his liberty of God!

II.

My face lives always in the quenchless light,
Frail gold of twilight burns across my breast,
The red dusk girds me and my limbs are
pressed

In warm, wan shadows deepening down to
night.

My hair, red gold on brows of faultless white,
Inspires earth's children to my fatal quest;
Youth's passionate face in mortal hope of
rest

Grows blind against me, wearying of my
might.

With ravenous lips men scourge my lustrous
flesh

And crowd the quivering dusk with name-
less sin;

Death takes them, still insatiate, from my
mesh.

Viewless, my feet pash down the one who dies,
While, sprung aloft from earth he festers in,
I watch the last-born laughing in mine eyes!

III.

Once was my name as fire, and once my wine
 Flushed in the veins of youth, and once the
 strong,
 The wise, the lyric, leaped beneath my thong
 Of love and hailed me human and divine!
Mine was the world's confessed desire and
 mine
 The echoing thunder of the seas of song,
 Priests, virgins, youths—a florid, sumptuous
 throng—
 Gave me luxurious service at my shrine!
Now tho', bereft, I seem perchance as one
 Smothered in night whose memory keeps the
 flush,
 The fire and huge transcendence of the sun,
Still, in the apostate world, my fight I know
 Is won, and still the lips of manhood crush,
 And still the pained blood throbs thro' limbs
 of snow!

IV.

For me, the eldest and the loveliest God,
For me and for my equal happiness
The woman aches with sweet maternal stress,
The slow seed breaks beneath the reeking
sod.
For me the strong, swift feet of dawn are
shod
With fire, for me the flowers' frail petals
press
Fearless and faithful, and warm winds ca-
ress
The violet sea-ways where of old I trod.
For me the long, resounding years return
With gradual seasons, and the stately sun
Shepherds thro' void infinity his brood;
And only thro' my knowledge man may turn,
To larger consciousness the soul has won,
Leaving his outworn body for my food.

AD SERVAM.

SAPPHICS.

I

Day through, night through rest never gave its
 guerdon,
 Life unfolded never its heart's rejoicing,
 Sleep stood wrapped in visions of endless
 waking,
 Pale and relentless.

2

Dawn spread fire, the moon with its meagre
 twilight
 Died, the trees grew full of fresh sound and
 shadow;
 Bit with flame the implacable night, the sleep-
 less
 Shrivelled like parchment.

3

Day with dumb, white hours like scourges
 smote me,
Drop by drop day's river of sunlight drenched
 me,
Sight and sound day's weariness wrought
 upon me,
 Wrought as with iron.

4

So was night shed silent as sifted ashes,
Dim and sweet the invisible spring suspired,
Voiced with song, earth's passion of parturi-
 tion
 Toiled in the twilight.

5

Over earth the shadows were shod with silence,
Night descended ample and rapt and faultless;
Still was rest withholden and, pale and lidless,
 Sleep overglanced me.

6

Sleep!—Dark page unlettered in life's sad
volume—

Not for me thy cession of ceased remembrance,
Not for me thy dreamless, impassive mercy—
Thou hast denied me!

7

Fierce as fever blurred with fantastic fancy,
Night through, Life, with resonant lips convulsive,
Violent hands and eyes of incessant silence,
Smote and enslaved me.

8

All my flesh cried: "Symbol of starved desire,
"Pain of all pains weariest, thou hast cursed me
"Now with tears and now more cruel with
laughter,
"Hurt and caressed me!"

9

Then I cried to Death with exceeding anguish,
Prayed her thus—"O, Angel of tender wisdom!

"Wrap my brows in infinite night, in final
"Folds of thy cere-cloth!"

10

Then dislimned Life's image; the brawl and
babble

Ceased; yea, Life, the implacable Life relented,
Turned and, mute as tho' to disclose its meaning,

Leaned to caress me.

11

Then I saw the shadowless eyes, the scarlet
Lips of laughter, lust and of little whispers,
Whispers low and languid with fierce
dominion—

Life was translated!

Cried I then: "O, pity for me, O mighty
 "Gods of altars white as the limbs of lovers"—
 Then She laughed and suddenly, burned and
 broken,
 Soul was defeated!

Thro' me smote her silence of stolen secrets,
 Dear, too dear for words and too sweet for
 music,
 Till She grew, in subtle and grievous longing,
 Fervent as bloodshed.

Then I saw the glamour of limbs uncovered,
 Saw the fresh, frail curves of her body broken,
 Saw the mouth, the eyes everlasting vision
 Moist with her passion.

15

Soul was spent, flesh severed with sharp de-
 sire,—
 Flame on flame the print of her paces smote
 me,
 Yea! the song and sway of her eager body
 Surged in my senses.

16

Long I lay immobile, in monstrous struggle,
 Endless waking, weariness tense as harp
 strings,
 While the sobbing pulse of her blood against
 me
 Beat thro' my body.

17

Briefly then I knew why the sleepless demon
 Life, endured with sorrow and sound incessant,
 Knew why all the veins of my body filtered
 Wine for her thirsting.

18

Even Death, the goal and delight of living,
 Wrapped with earth's thick shadows, the sea's
 dense silence,
 Death, I knew, as Life in the day and night—
 time,
 Paled and grew sentient.

19

She, I knew, beneath my unlifting eyelids,
 Dark with dust or blind with the weight of
 waters,
 She could still, with fiery fingers, sever
 Death from its shadow!

20

Yea! the cool, kind fingers of Death would
 kindle;
 Sleep is scared and darkness too weak to wall
 me;
 Naught conceals my soul from her soul's de-
 sire,
 Slave She enslaves me!

21

So that now my body and soul in grievous
 Love cry out—"O God, I would choose her
 nervous
 Fierce caress, tho' even the wings of slumber
 Closed to enfold me!"

22

Tho' my sleepless hours like fire and fever
 Burn my brain and all of my body suffers,
 Tho' my soul is famished, my heart leaps
 out in
 Wild supplication;

23

Cries—"O thou, Implacable Aphrodité,
 "Thou, whose feet flow flame and whose laugh-
 ter lightens
 "Down the trackless ways of the heart where
 bright blood
 "Burns on thy traces!—

24

"Thou, of Gods most pitiless, sumptuous, sanguine—

"When I burn out body and soul and perish,

"Let my cinders, sifted thro' some sad twilight,

"Fall in Her pathway!

25

"Where Her feet fall, yea! and beneath Her paces

"Let me lie in dust and with dust be mingled,

"Thrilled as now to feel of Her flesh the burden

"Bruise me in passage!

26

"There, tho' stamped and scattered, Her feet could thrill me,

"Yea! till flowers from out of my dust transpired

"Still to lure Her fancy and still to feel Her

"Mine as she crushed them!"



TANNHAUSER TO VENUS.

I have learned the inevitable destinies
 By sheer endurance of thy careless love!
 Yet with a human and so needful hope,
 A desperate guess, I dare confront thy will
 And task with doubt thy flushed divinity:
 Hear me! O Goddess, hear my last surmise!

I have watched thy face and seen the seasons
 pass,

And now I know that memory cannot be
 Where death is not nor any mortal change.
 Thou art immortal, therefore all thy life
 Is now,—the hours go by and leave no trace!
 O monstrous thought! Would I could ask
 thee where

And how they fare, the insatiable men,
 Lovers of thine whose blood besmeared thy
 feet,

Whose wild hearts perished as in fire, whose
 bones

Gleam white as starlight in the paths of time!
 O where's it passed, the strong processional,
 The young men and young women pale as fire,
 Life's desperate mariners who glimpsed thee
 forth—

Pharos that lamped the starless night of time—
 And sought thee even on death's engulfing
 seas?—

Tell me of them! Thy brows are pure of
 thought!

Yet had thine epic lovers of yesterday
 Lips and strong hands more fierce than even
 are mine;

Their violent will and weak humanity
 Suffered as mine to feel thy deathless youth!
 Then tell me—for, by heaven, my extreme
 plight

Lies bare before thee—if such men who strode
 Young in the young world are lapsed away
 Body and soul leaving no trace at all,
 Then where for me, for me who once forswore
 My sweet Lord Christ, the strong and stainless
 God,

Is triumph or hope or any tenderness?
 Am I more mighty than so much of time,
 So mighty and so wilful of my cause

That, by extreme desire, I may contrive
 To give thee mortal memory and pain and
 tears,

Feel thy heart falter and reduce to death
 The fashion of thy memorable flesh?
 Is this my only hope? Certain it is
 My whole life, harnessed to thine endless task,
 Toils without recompense, a merest tool
 Serving the vast monotony of fate;
 Certain it is that through eternal time
 No death can make the sight of my dazed eyes
 Grow bland or cool my fingers of thy feel!
 And therefore, drifted in the dreadful past,
 I shall be left a derelict on the shores
 Of thine oblivion that bear, I know,
 Wreckage of all the years and of all men!
 Certain it is—unless—O give me power
 And light! For in the midnight of despair
 I seem to glimpse the dawn of a huge hope
 That fires a pathway to my utmost goal!
 Not thine the power! I go from thee to me!
 Mine is the task—to teach my human soul
 The vastness of the immortal mood and thus
 Lift my fierce life to immortality!
 O hope great beyond all hope yet not vain!
 Haply I fail—yet I have known thy love

And served with life the soul's divinest end
 Since the extreme of all things leads to truth.
 Therefore I am content. Lift up thy hands
 And pour thy golden cataract of hair
 Over my face, then kiss me through the
 coils!—

The frailty of my heart that does thee wrong,
 Memory, and grief for human joy and pain
 Shall cease. Behold me fit to bear thy love!
 I will no more desire the sea-wind, cool
 At sunrise, nor the lesser joys than Thou:
 The clasp of friends and the low lights of
 home!

TWILIGHT.

Deep in thy lap I lay my head,
 Deep in my soul thy words resound;
 Thy lips where mine so lately bled
 Gleam like a wound.

Now, in the sad reluctant light
 The passionate silence of thy mood,
 I feel thy robe's perfume, and night
 And solitude.

Till in the solitude I feel
 The breaking heart, the dazzled brain
 Pulse with a longing tense as steel
 And more than pain.

More than all pain and all delight,
 All laughter and convulsive tears,
 More than all sleep in all the night
 Of endless years.

Thy robe's perfume is deep and warm,
The dusk is deep and sad and low :
I cannot save thee from love's harm
Nor let thee go.

I have nor strength nor will to save
Thy life from my desire or me.
I hold thee, Mistress still and Slave
Eternally!

SONG.

I am the soul of desire,
 The pleasure, the passion, the prayer;
 O, when shall my love for thee tire?
 Beloved, thou art fearfully fair
 And I am the soul of desire!

I am the soul of desire,
 I call with the tones of the sea,
 With the infinite yearn of the sea.
 I am thrilled with my love as a lyre
 Is thrilled with the songs that transpire
 For love, and I thirst as a fire
 For thee!
 For thy indolent hands and thy hair—
 O beloved! thou art fearfully fair
 And I am the soul of desire!

I am the soul of desire.

O where shall I find thee?

My love shall consume thee entire,

My passion shall bind thee!

For a day and a night and a morrow,

Thy body and soul shall be mine

Till the laughter of love and the sorrow

Are shed thro' thy senses like wine.

Where thy bosom is bare

My love shall suspire;

Thou art fair, O beloved, thou art fearfully
fair!

And I am the soul of desire!

VARIATIONS.



SONNETS.

I.

Strong saturation of sea! O widely flown,
 Far winds of fall, your litanies of pain
 Moan like the music of a wild refrain
 Heard thro' the midnight of a feudal town!
 Young night is lipped with jasper where the
 blown

Burden of evening lights intensely wane,
 And, shuddering seaward from the tawny
 plain,

Vague fold on fold the enormous dark comes
 down.

Gusty and fervid as the sleepless sea
 The passionate fancies of a formless fear
 Spring in my nervous brain like monstrous
 flowers;

The night, the wind-chant work their will of
 me,

And thoughts like death-bells echoing far
 and near,

Toll for life's lost, irrevocable hours,

II.

How many a life must thou the journey keep,
 O soul; thro' sexual seasons of the years?
 O heart, how many a harvest of thy tears
 Shall life's sharp sword of unfulfillment
 reap?

The breath of dawn shall blow—haply with
 tears!—

How oft, O heart, O soul, before the deep
 Darkness and still eternity of sleep
 Bring natural justice for life's long arrears?

Ah! when my rose of life is ripe to fall,
 Pray God I sink thro' gardens of the sun
 Till the dead fingers of oblivion

Constrain my heart, and there lie over me
 The tideless waters and the eventual
 Darkness of death's unlit, unlifting sea!

III.

Come home to me at last! Come home to me!
Bring me thy youth of tears and great de-
sires;

Frail round thy tired head the music tires,
The music shed between the stars and sea!
While still thy youth is echoing with its free
Love-songs resounding like a storm of lyres,
Come with thy deeds and dreams;—and
thro' the fires

Of wisdom sift the ash of memory.
Come home to me at last! Life whispers
“Come!”

Yea! thro' the mist of passions sad with loss,
Strong in the sumptuous dusk, the light of
home,

The light of soul where thou must journey,
lays,

While spring is sweet in all the old dear
ways,

A splendour and a sacrament across!

IV.

Be still and give thy fingers rest,
 Shut thy eyes the darkness, and thy lips that
 press
 Hard on the lips of life with fierce caress,
 Ease from their hunger and thy guideless
 quest
 Ask of the vacant eyes and stirless breast
 Of life's last angel, pale Forgetfulness,
 Peace and release from thought's eternal
 stress:
 See, of life's violent, fervent Gods, is best.
 Peace child! Beneath her hand the fretful
 flame
 Of long desire grows frail and faint as
 dream:
 The immediate life is alien to despair.
 Held on her heart seem life and death the same,
 And nothing is at all and all things seem,
 And if life dies thou shalt not even care!

V.

Then cried the song of Life: "The flowers
that fall,

"Spendthrift of perfume, shall return again

"Fed by the tireless earth and fragrant rain:

"Far down the glimmering sea the musical

"Lips of the dawn repeat their clarion call;

"Always the heart shall kindle to regain

"Love's young desire whose very strength is
pain,

"For life is love and love is best of all!"

Then breathed an elder music: "I am peace!

"Peace of the silent soul, sphered in such wise

"That no thing lives or dies, is pleased or sad

"In me, where hope and prayer and struggle
cease!

"Wise with my light thy calm and steadfast
eyes

"Beholding death shall not be even glad!"

DEATH IN YOUTH.

Thy lips grow cold against the lips of death,
 And peace shall come:—be mild and un-
 afraid!

Then, in the silence, like a tender breath,
 Life's bloom of fever on thy cheeks shall
 fade

As now the sunset's weariest saffron slips
 Over the moveless pallor of thy lips.

What tho' the lips of love are wet with tears?
 Life was, thou sayest, magnificent and mine!
 Youth was possessed of dreams, the abundant
 years

Thrilled like the freshness of a native wine!
 Behold! The hope of life is death, the
 goal
 Death that at last leads outward to the
 soul.

Haply forgetfulness shall come. Behold!

Day is a dream that haunts the elder night.
Still is the earth so young and thou so old,

Mute with thy memories flashed like shafts
of light

Thro' rain-swept days forlorn with beaten
bells,

Thy memories near and real as miracles.

As Life is stern be merciful and mild,

Solemn with joy as Life laughs loud with
pain,

Silent as life is shrill.—O dying child,

Be all life is not, then was life not vain

Since soul proves victor when the fight is
fought

And peace returns, profound and void of
thought.

Banish the keen regret, the foolish tears,

Salt on the kiss that burned thy longing
mouth!

Wisdom shall soon be perfect : all thy years

Harvest blown ashes of the gods of youth.

Now shall thy grief refrain, thy passions
cease :

Silence has come and in the silence peace!

Thou must forget or else 'twere vain to die,
 Death with thy memories is not death at
 all;
 Passion and pain and pleasure, thou and I,
 Life and its longings, must, beyond recall,
 Cease or unite or merge and death must
 come
 Like seaward wind that takes the rain-drop
 home.

Death shall forget tho' life's immortal power
 That gave thee strength to bear thy human
 fate
 Suffer and strive. Thro' death the mystic
 flower
 Of soul expands until thy youth's wise hate
 Of life has utterly passed in love away,
 While death prepares the spiritual day.

LULLABY.

Sleep, ah! sleep in the light of the moon,
Sleep, ah! sleep in the shadow of night,
For the hour of waking is soon, how soon!
And swift are the feet of light!

Sleep, ah! sleep in the light of the stars,
Sleep in the lull of the viewless airs,
For you wake to the world and its pitiful wars,
The flesh and its sordid cares.

Sleep, ah! sleep in the hush of the heart,
Dreamless, forget the return of strife,
When the curtains of shadow are stricken apart
On the pitiless drama of life.

Sleep, ah! sleep in the light of the soul,
In the measureless strength and the timeless
peace;
Sleep! and be free of the mind's control
In the prison of time and space.

Sleep, ah! sleep in the endless ways
Of the shadow of Death, in the cool, kind
earth,
Till the dark is dissolved in the golden haze
Of the Dawn of a greater birth.

Sleep! for haply a night will come
Where laughter is silent and none shall weep,
Where the Soul after infinite travel goes home
At last to an endless sleep.

AFTER DEATH.

She said :

Where shall my Soul be comforted,
My Body be satiated
Since he is dead ?

She said :

Since He is dead

Where shall my lips be fed that blushed and
bled

Against his lips, and where my fingers cling,
My arms enfold, my voice thrill whispering ?

My slow white hands shall fling

Over what secret, where,

The shadow of my hair ?

She said :

Because the Man is dead

To Thee I yield my soul, Lord God.

I thought he could not die

Leaving the vistas of his life untrod ;

I thought the mere desire of love sufficed
 To thwart Death utterly,
 For this how gladly soul were sacrificed!
 Now He is dead I learn thy litany,
 Lord God, and tame my lyric throat to prayer.
 Once, for his kiss, my lips were red,
 Now pale with tears they taste thy eucharist,
 And all my hair he loved, my sombre hair
 Lies sweet and heavy on the feet of Christ.

She said :
 Lo! he is dead, Lord God, my love is dead!
 Now, leaf by leaf,
 Summer is fallen, earth grown mute and deaf,
 And winter rigorous above his grave.
 In heaven the angels have
 Thy stars for choir and all thy sons for song,
 They live before thy face,
 Glad in the sweet suffusion of thy peace.—
 My love is dead; Lord God, I do him wrong,
 Where he lies hid
 Lonely beneath his coffin-lid,
 To pray thy grace in heaven,
 Nor even
 Can I by thee be comforted
 Since He is dead.

She said :

Yea ! tho' my love be dead,
 I know that never sleep
 Has shed her shadows on his lidless eyes ;—
 Always I wonder if the dead can weep !
 The desolate wind is cold above his head,
 The wall of night impervious where he lies
 And shrill with withered things that agonize
 As tho' his buried body changed to cries,
 As tho' he called to me and said :
 "My lips are jealous of the flesh of Christ
 "Thy lips have tasted in the eucharist,
 "Yea, of the heavy strewing of all thy hair
 "On Christ's sad feet !
 "My hands are jealous of thy sweet
 "White fingers cold in attitudes of prayer.
 "My heart is jealous of thy naked breast,
 "Crimson where late the altar's marble pressed,
 "Where once I took my rest ;
 "And in the violent ways of love I trod
 "My Soul is jealous of thy God !"

She said :

The stars of heaven are white with song,
 The Sons of God forever young ;
 Dark is my love, O Lord, my love is dead !

Lonely beneath his shroud he cannot rest
 Save where thy lilies fade against my breast.
 Lord! it would do him wrong
 And prove me faithless, if in Heaven
 My soul grew pure and calm with God;
 If, in the ways of good he never trod,
 My heart were comforted.

She said:

I choose the seven
 Sweet sins of love instead!

She said:

Summer has died because my love is dead,
 Winter is acrid as his sleepless eyes.
 Yet shall the earth wherein his body lies
 Thrill to the season's sun and soon be riven,
 Till Life, desire and dream of death,
 Leap forth and climb the hills of heaven
 And earth grow violent with spring
 That shall fling
 On the beating of her breath
 Foam of fresh flowers to the stainless sea.

She said:

Like the eternal spring, eternally
 Shall love persist in my dead Love and me,
 And Life, the elixir whence all love is fed,

Shall thrill between us so we cannot sever.
Lord God, we loved once and forever!
For both of us
Love is more marvellous,
Whether alone beneath the coffin-lid
Or lonelier and more desperate amid
The glad familiar ways of earth we trod,
Than Heaven with all its stars and hosts of
 song,
With all thy sons immaculately young,
And Thou Lord God!

WOMEN.

FIRST.

I.

She said: "O take me! Let my life become
"Part of your pleasure. As the rose that leaf
"By leaf falls scented from the crimson sheaf
"You loved, even so, until my life is numb
"And bare with giving, till the total sum
"Of joy my life contains, to serve your need
"Is spent, till all the music of my reed
"Is played to please you, till you leave me,
dumb—
"So am I yours! to love you till you tire
"Of love. I give so little!—yet the whole:
"The best and worst of me, my body and
soul!
"O take me! Yours the nobler part, to take
"Unrecompensed my prodigal desire
"That pains me and would kill me for your
sake!"

II.

He said: "Enough! I take you and repay

"Nothing you give, but waste your sacrifice;

"I let your body and soul alone suffice,

"Your fierce love's largess lure me for a day.

"Held in my power your soul shall cease to
pray,

"Your lips forget their pieties to entice

"My lips, and death at last shall film with ice

"Your desolate heart once drained and cast
away.

"Come to me! You shall utterly be turned

"Into my pleasure, till my satiate sense

"Sickens to see you, till your flesh is burned

"Dry in my service, till the soul you staked

"Against a careless kiss is lost, till hence

"I drive you, with the thirst you nourished
slaked!"

III.

She said: "Thank God! Beloved, I merely ask
 "Sufferance for love and me. My soul? I
 stake

"It, swift to lose the bauble for your sake,
 "To spill the liquor as I break the flask!"

She held the cup: then suddenly the masque
 Shattered before him, and the woman, real
 And soul-transfigured with matured ideal,
 Faced him—divine to meet her mortal task.
 As sunlight breaks thro' vistas grey with
 rain,

The breathless truth broke briefly on his
 brain.

He paused and felt her fail to understand.

She, desolate, shuddered watching him de-
 part;

The miracle of love's divine command

Filled him, the gospel of the human heart!

SECOND.

I.

"Sweet from my sin I rise before you, rise,
"Wild as the vision and savour of the sea,
"Bland as the shadow of sleep's euthanasy
"Shed between burning lids and aching eyes!
"Clothed in love's fire that damns and purifies,
"Mistress and slave, I yield me utterly,—
"Yours by the gods my love reveals to me,
"The gods my pitiless passion crucifies!
"Love for love's sake my body is born again
"Thrilled with a new virginity, my soul
"Lends my desire the dignity of pain.
"For you my lips are fire, my naked breast
"Profound as sleep and heavens of splendour
roll
"Over me, shattered with divine unrest!"

II.

He said, "I take you. Yet the laughter slips,
 "Mocking your sacrifice. Be still! The
 phrase
 "Is vain since sense with equal joy repays
 "Loss of the soul we crush between our lips.
 "Where's soul, my Mistress, when thy finger-
 tips
 "Drip wine till candles wither blaze by blaze,
 "And down thy breast no song can fitly praise
 "Pale drop by drop the ooze of daylight
 drips?
 "Why vex the mind? Why ponder—'Mine the
 gain.
 " 'Her gold against my dross ;—the sacrifice
 " 'Damns in acceptance—Heart must yield
 the pain
 " 'Of Heart due reverence, give the greater gift
 " 'Denial?' To scruple so were over-nice.—
 "Drown me in all your hair my fingers lift!"

III.

"Heart to my heart," She cried, "and mouth to mine!

"Lie close! I feel you like the pulse of life!

"Desire has pained my senses like a knife:

"Lie close, that I may know my body thine!

"Surely the pangs of love are all divine,

"And haply tho' my ways of love be dark

"Their depths may kindle with the saving spark!

"At least my incense floats before the shrine!"

"Give me thy lips!" he cried—and then his mind

Suffered with truth. He said, "My soul was blind!"

"And mine," She said, "Till love disclosed the light."

He fell beside her, "Speak!" he cried, "For me,

"For me the loveless—where is hope?" And she

Soothed him as tho' a child who wept for fright.

AT DAYBREAK.

I marked the hours beat by beat
And felt the silent night depart :
I held her, dead against my heart,
Beside the loud, incessant street.

Across the daylight drenched with rain
I heard the world's familiar strife,
My fingers held the pulse of life
That ran the shaking scale of pain.

Her body, bruised with love's embrace,
Grew cold, and where her lips were red
The dawn disclosed them grey and dead :
Her eyes were dumb—I kissed her face!

I kissed her tacit face and laid
My cheek on hers and caught her hand,
And guessed if God would understand
And find the joy of sin repaid!

Beside the loud, incessant street
I kissed her mouth and held her bound
Between my violent arms and found
Her mouth intolerably sweet.

I held her close, Ah! close to me
And kissed the scarlet ring that clasped
Her throat, where all my fingers grasped
And crushed her life out utterly.

I kissed her lips, her cheek, her hand,
My mouth was bitter salt with tears,
And she was dead.—If God appears
I wondered, will He understand?



THE FINAL WORD.

Hear me! I say to you—"This love of ours
 Can never be forgiven; nevermore
 Shall I, in peace and silence, pass my door,
 Sad with October sun and scattered flowers,
 Unhaunted of thy memory as before.

Nothing is virgin where thy feet have trod
 The byways of my inmost heart, and where
 My Soul stretched flowers to catch the sky-
 ward air,
 Thy hands have sown with chaff the fields of
 God.
 I know thy love is loveless as despair.

I thrilled in soul, God knows my body fired,
 Kindling thy perfect body, for the food
 Whose sweetness proved pain sweet and
 evil good,
 Till Life could no more bear what life desired,
 Until the lips of life were crushed to blood.

Now there is no forgiveness. Go or stay—
I cannot care, my love has been so great!
I am too tired now to love or hate;
While hour by hour I see, and day by day
Life's tears roll down the marble face of
fate!"

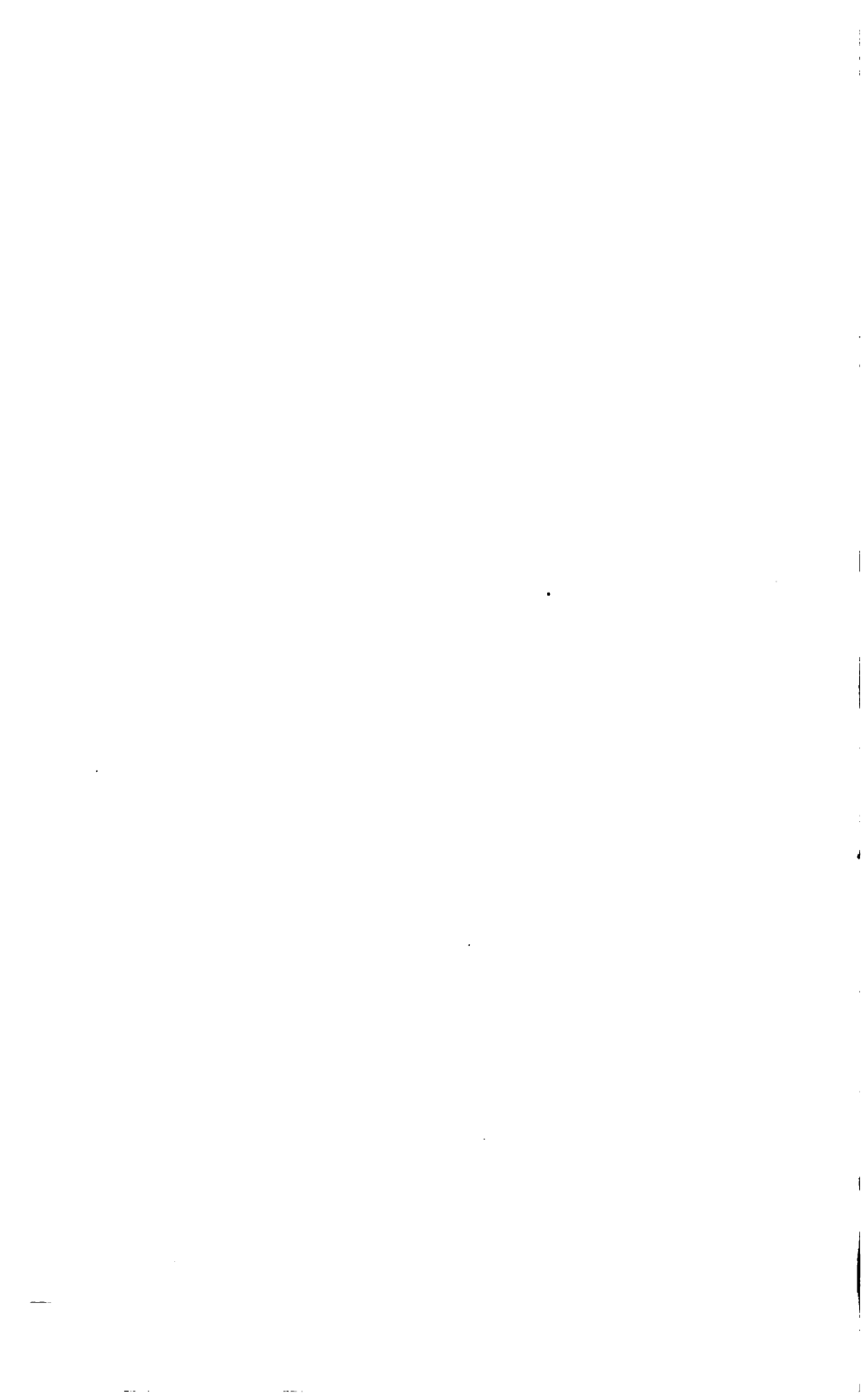
TO C. L. G.

The old days come near to me like dead women
 with pale and tender hands,
The gold of their hair shakes down about my
 face,
And the light of their eyes is tawny and sad
 like the light of large, calm sunsets,
And their silence seems as a fragment of eter-
 nity.

The old days come near to me and thy presence
 is ever among them,
The presence of thy childhood fresh and dear
 and dead,
Thine infancy and mine!
Linked in a living memory, sad as love and
 death are sad.



THE SONG OF MAN.



THE SONG OF MAN.

O come out with me to the New Gods, I have
fathomed the lies of the old,
And the pillars of Paradise crumble and the
ashes of Hell are grown cold.
I have striven and lived and remembered thro'
the range of the numberless years,
Until strange as a dawn in the midnight the
goal of my seeking appears!

I have dared in the spirit's conception, I have
shaped with the might of my hands,
Were the dreams of my ecstasy mortal? Yet
godlike I wrought their commands!
In the twilight of temples I builded, by the
flames of the altars I fed,
I have trembled and wondered and wor-
shipped, yea, bled as the sacrifice bled!

I have blinded the Soul's aspiration with torture and triumph and pain,
 I have died for a word, for an idol, for an idol,
 a word I have slain,
 In the fear of a merciless master I have bent
 like a slave to the rod,
 I have turned in my anger and questioned of
 God and the judgments of God.

I have minted in marble and music the gold of
 the heart of my youth,
 And a maiden's desire has brought me the feast
 of the fruit of her mouth.
 I have folded my love as a mantle over limbs
 that were naked for this,
 I have broken my heart on a lute-string, and
 bartered my soul for a kiss.

I have lived with my boys and my women for
 lust and the laughter of lust
 Till the Love-Goddess, mortal in marble, was
 shattered to shards in the dust,
 And when Life unrelenting renewed me and
 the soul of me suffered for food,
 I have waked to a new revelation, I have canted
 of evil and good.

I have damned and divided in judgment, I have
 'stablished the bounds of my blame,
I have tempted the soul with a vision, I have
 menaced the flesh with a flame,
Till the voice of my God in his anger was like
 thunder of wind on the sea,
Till I cowered and sinned and was secret, till I
 longed and was feared to be free.

Till, too weak to face God in his heaven, too
 timid to dare him in hell,
I defiled him with empty observance and I
 cheapened his name to a spell;
With a blasphemy cynic with safety, with a
 cowardice born of my greeds,
With the slime of respectable falsehood, I fash-
 ioned a God to my needs.

I have lied in my soul as I muttered the prayers
 of the priests that I paid,
I have lied in my heart as I sold it, I have lied
 for my heart was afraid,
I have lied to the priests and the people, I have
 lied to my body and soul
All the lies that the meanest of sins pays the
 meanest of virtues for toll!

Then I sickened of lies and discovered in
breathless amazement—at last
Soul and Body, to-day and to-morrow released
from the ghosts of the past—
That, washed clear with the tears of my man-
hood, song-bright with the poems of my
youth,
Wonder-wide with long dreams and desires,
my vision was trained for the Truth!

Yea! the silence of time and its changes have
left not a God that was mine,
Yea! my fashions of faith have been faithless,
Yea! my heart has been drained of its wine,
Yea! the lips of my women have withered, and
for gold I have minted my blood,
But at least I have learned thro' the ages all the
lies of the world and of God!

From the Syrian glades where the perfect, pale
woman grew mortal for love,
From the vortex of chaos with darkness shed
under and round and above,
In the depths of the twilight of Asia, in the
myriad ways I have trod,
I have tried all the fashions of living and served
all the phases of God.

I have merged in the spirit of Brahma, I have
 prayed by the stream and the tree,
 I have seen how She rose as a portent from the
 bitter, blue ways of the sea,
 In the name of the wise Galilean, by the sign of
 a merciful God,
 I have plundered, enslaved, and smeared over
 the sin with the silence of blood.

My blood from the altars of Ishtar has flowed
 to the foot of the Cross,
 It has dripped from the dewlaps of Seket and
 Venus has laughed at my loss,
 I have burned in the gardens of Nero, I have
 died in the circus at Rome,
 And the wine of God's mercy I prayed for was
 meagre and bitter as foam.

I have served all the alien masters still-born
 from my folly and fears,
 I have laughed till I wept in derision, I have
 wept till I laughed at my tears,
 And I cry "Thro' the range of creation and
 time I have tested the whole,—
 "Then come out with me to the New Gods, the
 Great Gods, Body and Soul!

"To the Gods who are sure and sufficient, who
are free and more fatal than Fate,

"Who can tally the love of a virgin or the heart
of a man in his hate,

"Who are wise with a perfect remembrance,
who reject not a creed nor a crime,

"Who compassionate all, who interpret the
ways and the wonders of Time!

"Who have builded and broken all laws of the
Heaven and Earth, who are free,

"Who have lifted the seals from the sunrise,
made pregnant the womb of the sea,

"Who have scattered the phantoms of heaven,
wrecked the thrones of the world and
their spell,

"Who have sown and reaped harvest of flowers
in the fire-waste deserts of hell!

"For my God is the friend that I cherish, and
my God is the woman I love,

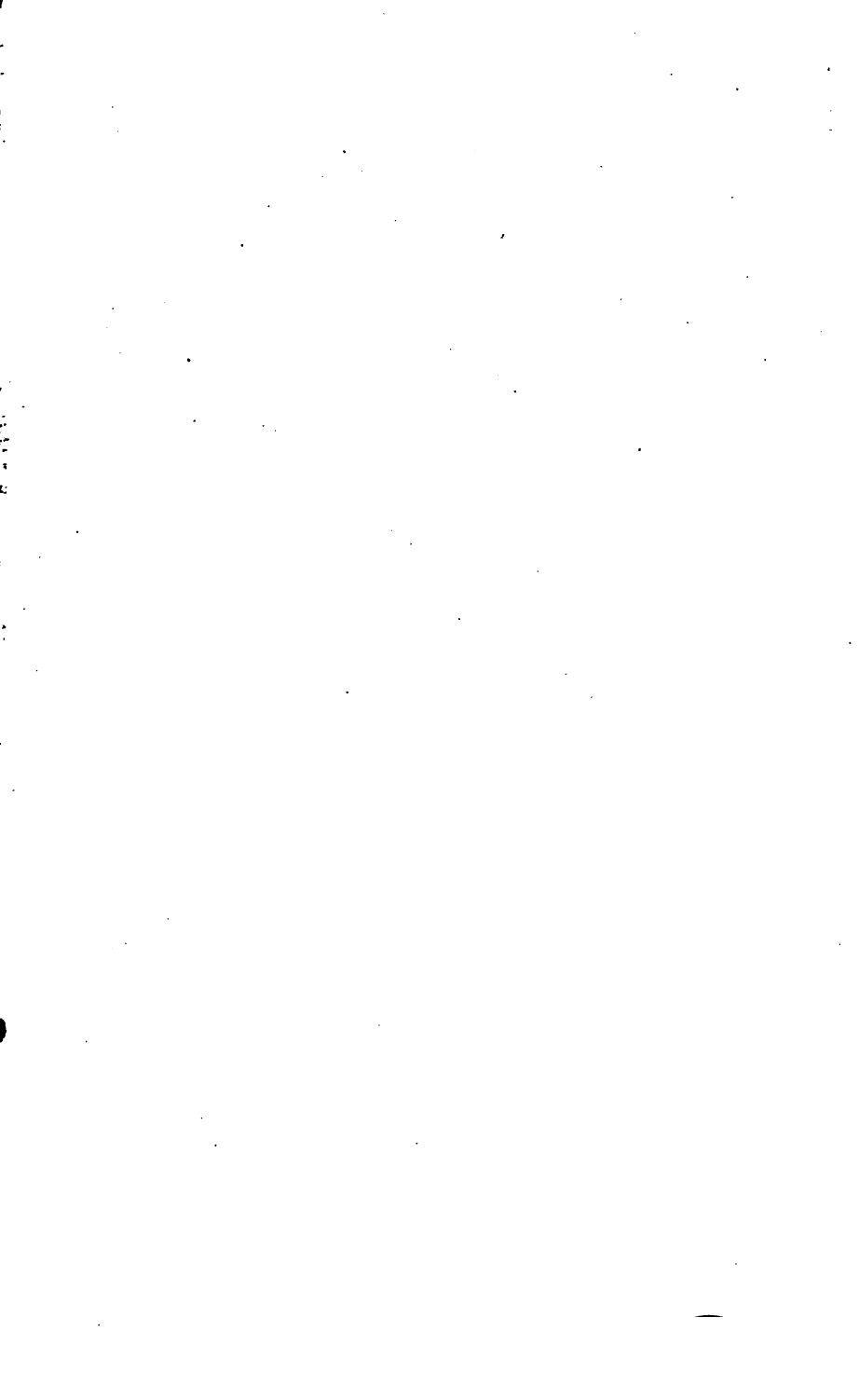
"My God is the Spring on the hillsides, the Sea
and the marvel thereof,

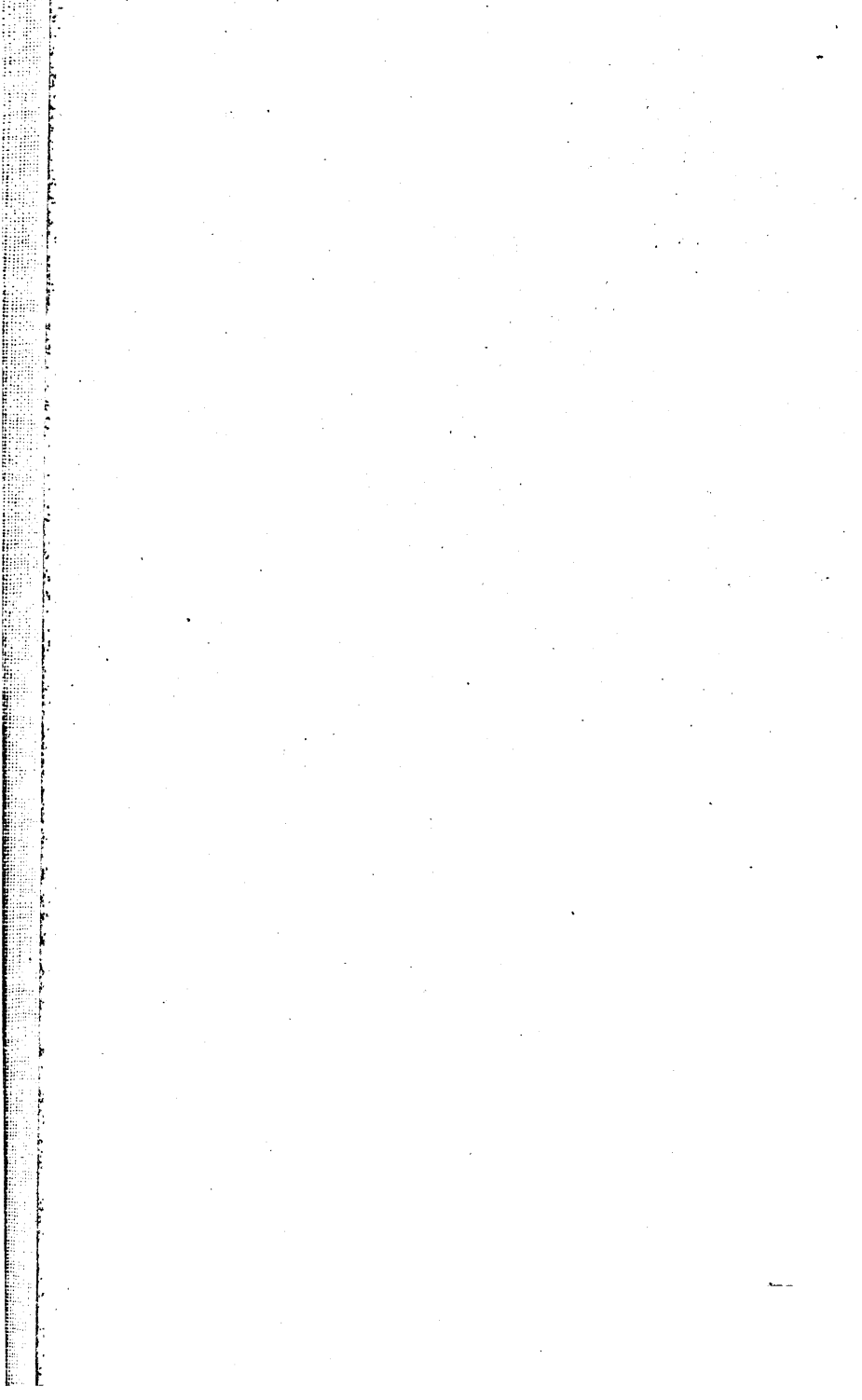
"My God is the justice of sunlight unhindered
by power or pelf,

"And vast beyond all and inclusive of all
things, my God is Myself!"

FINIS.









APR 4 - 1933

